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In Memoriam

Lewis Baldwin Parsons



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PRESENTED BY



LEWIS B. PARSONS.

IN HIS COLLEGE DAYS.

In Memoriam

General Lewis Baldwin Parsons

Born April 5th, 1818
Entered into Eternal Life, March 16th, 1907

"And so may we,
Ever holding fast to the right, as God gives us to see it;
Earnest and faithful, in the discharge of each day's duty;
Trusting the Infinite Wisdom and Love of our Heavenly Father
And holding His Goodness in perpetual remembrance, thus
End our lives and open our eyes on Eternal scenes."

L. B. P.

Published Privately
1908

Gift
Miss Parsons

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FOREWORD.

This long and useful life had touched so many other lives, that although most of his own generation have now passed away, there are still living many younger men and women, to whom, both by word and example, he was an inspiration, and to whom these tributes and recollections may be precious.

They have therefore been gathered together by his children, in loving memory of a devoted Father; of one, who in all the relations of life was faithful; who ever sought what was true; whose aims and ideals were pure and high, controlled always by a stern sense of duty; who was a loyal friend—a faithful citizen—an ardent patriot—an earnest follower of Christ Jesus.

Flora, Illinois. 1908.

In the Autumn of 1906 General Parsons' strength, which had been failing for some time, seemed unequal to the tax made upon it by a long journey and he therefore, gave up his accustomed trip to the South. He, however, kept up his usual occupations at home, reading, looking after his personal correspondence, which was always one of his greatest pleasures, and frequently driving out on pleasant days. Shortly before Christmas a slight over-exertion brought on much suffering with his heart and for a while, it seemed as if the end of his life was near. He was very quiet and uncomplaining during this time and in spite of his weakness kept up his interest in affairs, in his own business, the future management of his large farm, the Church and events in the world at large.

In February he was so much stronger that he began planning for the coming summer with something of his old-time energy, among other work, hoping to be able to sort and arrange his papers connected with the Civil War. On March the 6th, he was suddenly taken with a violent chill, resulting in what seemed like bronchitis, but which was in reality the inability of the heart to perform its proper functions and his condition grew rapidly worse. The only complaint he made was of being "so tired," but he willingly took all the offered remedies. On the evening of the 15th, after having lain in a semi-conscious condition for hours, he suddenly sat up and in his strong, clear voice exclaimed, "Thank God for what He has done." Then resting back again on the pillows, he remained motionless until the following afternoon at four o'clock, when peacefully and quietly his soul passed to its eternal home.

On Monday morning, after a brief service of prayer for the family and friends, he was carried to the Pres-

byterian Church in Flora, of which he had been for many years an elder and there given into the care of the members of the Grand Army Post, who had asked to be allowed some part in the final services. While they kept their watch, the friends and neighbors in the town passed by for a last look at the face which had been familiar in their midst for so many years, the children from the schools coming also with their teachers.

At one o'clock the final services were conducted by the pastors of the various churches in the town and the Rev. W. P. Hosken, a former pastor, while the Rev. Willis G. Craig D. D. L.L. D. of Chicago, a relative and life-long friend of GENERAL PARSONS, gave the address. At the close of the services the old soldiers wrapped the flag around the casket and it was carried to the railroad station, for the final journey to St. Louis. There it was met by members of the Yale Club and then taken to the former home of GENERAL PARSONS' brother, Mr. Charles Parsons, to rest until the following day. At ten o'clock on the morning of March 19th, a brief service was conducted by the Rev. Dr. Craig and the Right Rev. Daniel S. Tuttle, D. D., Bishop of Missouri, after which the immediate family went to Bellefontaine Cemetery and there all that was mortal of this beloved one, was laid to rest, there to await the Resurrection Day.

Lewis B. Parsons

Historical Sketch

LEWIS B. PARSONS.

Among the various causes which have contributed toward giving to the great State of Illinois the position which she holds among the first of her sister States in the Union, perhaps no single one has had greater influence than the character of the men, who, coming from different sections of the country, both North and South, during the three decades preceding the war, were to make their homes within her borders and to influence the future, not only of the State of their adoption, but of the entire country. In our minds arise at once the names of Lincoln, Grant, Trumbull, David Davis, McClernand, Washburne, Palmer and others, men who brought honor to their State; and who, in the great struggle for human liberty then impending, stood as leaders, whether in the Councils of the Nation or facing the foe on the battle field.

Among these adopted sons of Illinois we find the subject of this sketch, Lewis Baldwin Parsons, who, with the exception of the period of the Civil War and a few years preceding and subsequent to that time, was a resident of the State from the time of his leaving Harvard Law School in 1844 until his death, March 16, 1907.

Of Puritan ancestry, he was descended, on the paternal side from Cornet Joseph Parsons, who came from England with William Pyncheon and settled in Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1636, and on the maternal side from Charles Hoare of Gloucester, England, whose widow came to this country in 1640 and who was the ancestor of the well-known Hoare family of Quincy and Concord, Massachusetts. Charles Parsons, the grandfather of the subject of

this sketch, was a Captain in the Revolutionary Army, serving from October, 1775, until peace was declared in 1783, having been with Washington during the terrible winter at Valley Forge and with him also at the final surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. His son, Lewis B. Parsons, Senior, emigrated about 1811 to Western New York, at that time a remote wilderness, where he soon afterward married Lucina Hoar, who was like himself, a native of Massachusetts.

The life of these early pioneers was full of hardships, battling with the trials incident to the development of a new country and the struggle made strong, brave men and women. Into this family, which was, both by inheritance and training, of the most rigid Puritan faith, standing "strong for the right as God gave them to see it," was born on April 5, 1818, the year which also gave birth to the State of Illinois, a son, Lewis B. Parsons, Junior. His early life was spent in Homer, New York, but when ten years old, his father removed to St. Lawrence County, in the northern part of the State, which was then but little settled and largely a native forest. Here school advantages were very limited, but with the same earnestness and perseverance which characterized his later life, the boy made the best of his opportunities and at the age of sixteen was teaching a small country school, in what is now known as the Thousand Island region. That even then, he showed more than ordinary originality and force of character, is evidenced by the fact that when visiting that section sixty years after, he found two of his former pupils still living, who distinctly recalled him and his manner of teaching.

He continued his studies as best he could, until 1836, when at the age of eighteen, he started for New Haven to enter Yale College. It was at this time he saw a railroad, the first in the State having been recently opened from

Utica to Albany; from which point he went by boat to New York and thence to New Haven. Entering Yale College with the class of 1840, he found himself so poorly prepared that it was only by the closest application he was able to keep up with his class, with the result, that while the end of the Sophomore year found him with a good standing, the over-study had seriously affected his health. At this time, moreover, his father, having now a family of ten children, of whom the subject of our sketch was one of the oldest and having only a moderate income, became unable to give his son further assistance and advised his giving up College and going into business. With characteristic courage and determination, the young man, after careful consideration, decided to finish the course, borrowing money from a relative and depending upon his own exertions in the future to repay it. To this end he taught a classical school in Western New York during the winter of his senior year, having among his scholars Thomas Cooley—afterwards Judge Cooley, the great authority on Constitutional Law—who became a life long friend. Of this period, with its struggles, he wrote later in life, "Having determined to graduate, my ambition sustained me in the effort and though I could not secure the standing I desired, yet I believe it was such as to gain for me the respect of instructors and classmates and their kindly regard through life. I have never regretted my persistence. The training I secured, the tastes then formed, the life long friendships of so many men of influence and high character, with many of whom my relations have been intimate, have been sources of great enjoyment."

After graduating from College, he and two classmates took passage in a sailing vessel for New Orleans to try their fortunes, but yellow fever being then of frequent recurrence there, Parsons decided to go farther North, where he had

other College friends and finally made his way to Noxuba County, Mississippi, where he took charge of a classical school, remaining for nearly two years. His residence there had a very important effect upon his later life, as he learned by personal observation more fully to understand the evils of slavery. At first, charmed with the agreeable social surroundings and with the delightful hospitality then customary on Southern plantations, so different from his earlier experiences in the North, he thought of settling permanently in the South. But as time passed and he learned more of the injurious effects of slavery, upon the individual as well as the community, his opinions changed, and in 1842 the earnest solicitations of his father added to his own inclinations, decided him to return to the North. Although he never regretted his decision, still he always looked back upon the time spent in the South as among the happiest years of his life and the friendships formed there were a lasting pleasure.

Going North by the way of the Mississippi River, he landed at St. Louis, then went on to Galena and by stage across Illinois, which he described as "almost entirely unsettled, but one of the loveliest countries" he had ever seen; thence to Milwaukee and around the Lakes to Buffalo. His school had proved most successful and he had now accumulated enough money to pay his college indebtedness and to enable him to carry out the plan formed early in life, of studying law. Thus the autumn of 1842 found him settled at Cambridge and hard at work, among a group of earnest young men, some of whom became life long friends. Judge Story of the United States Supreme Court and Judge Greenleaf, were then at the head of the Harvard Law School and to the ambitious young man it was of the greatest value to have the opportunity for training and discipline, under these eminent lawyers. He often described

in later years the impression also made upon his mind at this time, by seeing Webster, then at the height of his fame; and whom he would turn to follow, as he walked along the streets of Boston, seizing every opportunity also of hearing him speak.

On leaving Cambridge in 1844, PARSONS determined to seek his fortunes in the West, and buying a small law library in New York, he started out like many other young men of the period, with only such capital as came from his natural ability, his education and his determination to succeed. Stopping in Washington, he spent some weeks listening to the debates in the Senate on the Tariff Question, which were then exciting deep interest and which were led by Webster, Clay, Benton, Silas Wright and other of our greatest men. Previous to that time, his political opinions had not been fixed, though his father having been a strong Whig, it would have seemed natural that the son should have held similar views, but after hearing these discussions, he became through conviction a Democrat, and, having once decided, his principles never changed.

From Washington he went to Wheeling, Cincinnati, Dayton—where he was strongly inclined to settle—and thence to St. Louis, at that time a place of 27,000 inhabitants and beginning to attract much attention. Here he expected to remain, intending to open an office and begin the practice of his profession, but meeting some Yale graduates, he learned from one of them, Mr. Hall, that he had recently come from Alton, where his former partner, Newton D. Strong, was still practicing and having a large business, was anxious to take in a younger man as partner. It being a question of necessity with MR. PARSONS to secure as promptly as possible some means of support, he accepted the offer of Mr. Hall, to go up the river, and the following day found him in Alton with a group of

Yale men, Mr. Strong among them, enjoying the reminiscences of college days. After a most agreeable evening they separated and on the following day, April 5, 1844, Mr. Strong made him an offer of full partnership. This, to the young man without experience in the practice of law, was most unexpected and he accepted it gladly, being admitted to the bar within a few days and at once entering upon the practice of his profession. with the energy and singleness of purpose, characteristic of him through life. Of the next ten years he has left few memoranda, for it was a period of intense activity, not only in his private business and his profession, but also in affairs pertaining to the general development of the country.

His partner, Mr. Strong, was of a good old New England family, a brother of Justice Strong of the Supreme Court of the United States, a man of great natural ability, as well as thorough training in his profession and of high moral character and refinement, and the business connection thus formed, proved not only advantageous to Mr. Parsons, but eminently agreeable and satisfactory to both partners. At the end of two years, however, Mr. Strong returned to the East to live and Mr. Parsons formed a partnership with Judge Henry W. Billings, which continued for several years, until he removed to St. Louis.

Of his character at this time the history of Madison County says, "He had the reputation of being a sound, industrious lawyer—his forte, however, consisted in his remarkable business capacity.—At the bar, he was always confided in, as an enterprising, attentive, successful and honorable member of the profession." During his residence, in Alton not only was he eminently successful in the practice of law, but he also accumulated a competency through the purchase of lands, which could then be bought at a very low price, increasing greatly in value in a few years. He,



LEWIS B. PARSONS, LAWYER.
ABOUT 1854.

moreover, made an acquaintance with the foremost men of his profession, as well as with leading men throughout the State, and formed friendships which gave him great pleasure and proved of value to him later, when conducting the duties of his office as Chief of Transportation throughout the West.

In 1847 he married Sarah G. Edwards, the daughter of Dr. Benjamin F. Edwards and niece of Governor Ninian Edwards, who died not long after, and in 1852 he married her younger sister, Julia M. Edwards.

In 1854 he removed to St. Louis, continuing the practice of his profession. Among his clients was the banking firm of Page & Bacon, which at that time was engaged in the building of the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad—now the Baltimore & Ohio Southwestern—from St. Louis to Cincinnati, and holding a controlling interest in it, they induced him to leave his general practice and give his entire attention to their affairs. He removed temporarily to Cincinnati, where he became deeply interested in the building of the road, as attorney and financial agent, and after its completion in 1857, retained his connection with it for many years, being at various times Treasurer, Director and President.

It was while traveling on horseback in 1854, over the proposed line of this road through Southern Illinois, that he first saw the tract of land which he bought soon after and which eventually became his home. At that time an unbroken prairie, crossed by the old "Vincennes Trace," with deer, prairie chicken and other wild game abounding, it was a beautiful sight, and its gradual improvement and cultivation became a source of great interest to him.

Soon after the opening of the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad General, then Captain, George B. McClellan became

its Vice-President and a warm attachment between him and Mr. Parsons was formed.

Having lost his wife in 1857, he planned to give up business as soon as he could arrange his affairs and go abroad, but the unsettled condition of the country and fears for the future, caused him to change his plans and in 1860 retiring from active connection with the Railroad, he returned to St. Louis to watch the progress of events, later spending the winter of 1860-1 in Washington, as a deeply interested spectator. His letters written during this time show his intense feeling against the course pursued by Buchanan and his advisers, together with the fear that no way would be found of settling the great questions at issue, except through a terrible civil war.

In the spring of 1861 he returned to St. Louis where the Southern element was largely in control and aided by the Governor and Legislature, had planned to turn the State of Missouri over to the Confederacy. This was prevented by the prompt action of General Lyon and at the capture of Camp Jackson, May 10, 1861, Mr. Parsons was beside General (then Colonel) Frank P. Blair, serving as Volunteer Aide. Realizing the certainty of war, although past the age of military service, he determined as he wrote "to give all aid in my power, for the preservation of the Government, as my grandfather had given seven years of his life during the Revolutionary War," and beginning at once to arrange his private affairs so that they could be left, he wrote in the early autumn to General McClellan, offering his services in any position where the General thought he could be of use. In response, McClellan desired him to come to Washington and on his arrival there, gave him a position on his staff, with the rank of Captain. Soon finding that this position "involved no special duties or responsibilities" and being exceedingly anxious to go into

active service, CAPTAIN PARSONS asked permission to resign, that he might return to the West and raise a regiment. General McClellan, however, having knowledge of his business ability, urged that he could be of more service to the Government by remaining in the Quartermaster's Department and he was therefore transferred to the West and assigned to duty under General Robert Allen, then Chief Quartermaster in charge at St. Louis.

Here his first service was on a commission with General (then Captain) Phil Sheridan and Captain Hoyt, to examine the great mass of claims that had risen under Fremont's administration. These claims proved to be of such irregular and, in some cases, fraudulent character, involving so large amounts of money and requiring such careful investigation, that it was finally decided to turn them over to a Civil Commission, composed of Judge David Davis and Joseph Holt, Judge Advocate General of the United States.

Being released from this service, CAPTAIN PARSONS sought again to be permitted to go to the front, but he had already so clearly shown his superior business and executive ability, that his personal wishes were not heeded, and soon after he received from General Allen the following order, dated December 9, 1861: "You will take charge of all the transportation pertaining to the department of the Mississippi by river and railroad and discharge all employees not required to facilitate this particular service." As this department included the Mississippi and its tributaries, the territory it covered "extended from the Yellowstone to Pittsburg and New Orleans," the lower Mississippi coming under actual control, as fast as the Confederates were driven back.

By the country at large, this vast work of transportation "behind the scenes," as it were, in the great drama

of war then being enacted, was but little known or considered and even after so many years, has never yet received its due recognition.

John Fiske, the historian, writing to General Parsons in January, 1901, said, "I am hoping to make use of your reports when I come to treat of the Civil War as a whole, which I hope to live long enough to do," but not many months later, the pen of this gifted writer was laid down forever and this chapter of the History of the Civil War still waits to be written.

But by the leaders in that struggle, the Generals on the field, planning for battles, where delay in any particular might mean defeat and fearful disaster, the importance of the proper management of the Transportation Department was fully understood and it was most fortunate that the officer now put in charge of this department was a man with remarkable talent for organization, of great executive ability and the highest integrity, united to the most intense loyalty to his country and devotion to duty in her service.

The Army regulations of that time being intended for an army of some 15,000 men in a time of peace, were totally inadequate for the great numbers thus suddenly brought into service, who must be transported over long distances and who required enormous quantities of supplies of every kind, which must be forwarded with utmost promptness and dispatch. Great confusion had therefore resulted and Captain Parsons first turned his attention to remedying the evils connected with the *Railroad* service, where, owing to the fact that any officer could give orders for transportation, the Railroads, though loyally struggling to meet every demand upon them, were not able to furnish the large amount of requisitions. At the same time they held vouchers in great quantities for which they could not receive payment, the consequence being that there were

endless complaints and general discontent on the part of the Railroads, with constant delays and resulting danger to the armies in the field. A few simple, concise regulations and forms fixing responsibility were prepared by CAPTAIN PARSONS, which proved so successful in bringing about system and order and were so satisfactory to the Railroads, that they were adopted throughout the West as the basis of Government Transportation throughout the War; and subsequently, with other regulations added by GENERAL PARSONS, became the basis of General Rules for Army Transportation, still in use.

The system thus introduced in railroad transportation proving so satisfactory, CAPTAIN PARSONS next sought a remedy for the evils connected with the steamboat transportation, which were even greater than those of the railroads. During Fremont's administration large numbers of boats had been engaged by charter and while still receiving pay for their services were much of the time lying idle at enormous expense to the Government. A large majority of both steamboat owners and employees on the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers were sympathizers with the Confederacy and with the exception of a few loyal steamboat men in St. Louis, were united in their efforts to prevent any change in the system of chartering boats and consequently the effort to remedy the wrongs existing, involved far greater difficulty than with the railroads. CAPTAIN PARSONS advertised for bids for Government transportation on an ordinary business basis, and it at once became evident that the opportunity for making large profits out of the Government Service would soon be at an end. Hence great antagonism to the new system was aroused, every effort being made to prevent its being put into successful operation, as well as to secure the removal of CAPTAIN PARSONS from office. Finding appeals to his im-

mediate superiors unsuccessful, a protest was sent to the Secretary of War, which Mr. Stanton referred to Quartermaster General Meigs and which the latter returned to CAPTAIN PARSONS for explanation. In the meantime the changes made were beginning to bring about such great improvement in the service, that when in reply CAPTAIN PARSONS sent a statement of facts, offering to resign if his course met with the disapproval of the Government, the only answer he received was a letter from General Meigs in which he said, "I am glad to recognize the fidelity with which you have performed your duty to the Department and to the country."

From this time CAPTAIN PARSONS had the increasing confidence of Secretary Stanton and General Meigs and was able to carry through the reforms he desired, with the result that the business was done with system and order, at a greatly reduced cost to the Government and with an efficiency and promptness which enabled it to be said that "seldom have any requisitions been in this office over two days and the great majority have been answered within twenty-four hours."

The importance of systematic river transportation throughout the Mississippi Valley can only be properly estimated by recalling the armies operating in that region, the enormous quantities of supplies necessary for them and the great battles fought there, wherein "the victories of action were made possible by the victories of organization." The difficulties in the way of such organization seemed almost insurmountable, requiring the utmost vigilance and unremitting labor, while even with the most carefully prepared rules and regulations and the assistance of efficient and capable officers, there were incessant complaints, rendering the position one most distasteful to a man of Captain PARSONS' temperament, who desired the more active duties

of field service. He, therefore, again requested to be allowed to resign from the Quartermaster's Department, this time addressing himself to Secretary Stanton in person, who replied in his emphatic manner: "It is the duty of a good officer to go where his superiors think he can be of the most service; you, as well as I, know where that is, and you must stay there." His retention in this department was, therefore, settled and in April 1862 he was promoted to the rank of Colonel and assigned as Aide on the staff of General Halleck, then in command at St. Louis.

At the opening of the War the Government held no point south of Cairo and to this place CAPTAIN PARSONS was ordered in December, 1861, to consult with General Grant in person, as to the boats necessary for the proposed movement on Forts Henry and Donelson, and on the 2nd and 3rd of February 15,000 men were put on transports, proceeded to Paducah, thence up the Tennessee, and on the 6th Fort Henry was captured. A part of the forces were then re-embarked—moved down the Tennessee and up the Cumberland, a distance of one hundred and ten miles and joining with the troops that had marched over land, captured Fort Donelson on the 16th. After the fall of these forts, the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers were opened and the capture of Corinth, a few months later, opened the Mississippi to Memphis, but it was not until after the fall of Vicksburg that the river to New Orleans was passable and even until the close of the war, bands of guerrillas made traffic dangerous.

The great extent of river navigation, as well as the constant difficulties and dangers under which it was carried on may be shown by an extract from GENERAL PARSONS final report in 1865, in which he says: "From Brownsville, the head of navigation on the Monongahela in Pennsylvania, via Pittsburg, down the Ohio to Cairo; up the Mississippi

to the Missouri, then to Fort Benton, the head of navigation on the Missouri, a distance of 3,000 miles, the South or West of these rivers has, during the war been constantly subject to incursions by the Rebels, or Indian Savages, instigated by them to hostility; while the 400 miles of the Tennessee, 300 miles of the Cumberland, 350 miles of the White River, 650 miles of the Arkansas to Fort Gibson, 150 miles of the Yazoo, 620 miles of the Red River, and 1,150 miles of the Mississippi below Cairo, were long under their control."

To give in the space of a brief article any comprehension of the vast amount of supplies required for armies thus scattered over thousands of miles, or to show the rapidity and safety with which large numbers of troops were moved from point to point is impossible. In a report covering the first three years of his service, COLONEL PARSONS was able to say that up to that time there had been "no accident to any boat in government service, resulting in any material loss of life, and this too, when there was an extended organization for the sole purpose of the destruction of river transports." While General Sherman bears testimony to the fact, "that no military movement in the West has failed or faltered for lack of transportation" and that "the wants of armies in the field have been anticipated and met with alacrity and dispatch." Again quoting from a report of COLONEL PARSONS: "It will be seen that at this time the large armies of Grant, Sherman, Rosecrans, Banks and Steele were almost exclusively dependent upon river transports for their reinforcements and immense supplies."

In May, 1862, COLONEL PARSONS accompanied General Halleck south as a member of his staff, expecting to see active service in the field, but was able to remain only long enough to witness the evacuation of Corinth, when his duties necessitated his return to St. Louis.

Early in December, General Grant, then near Oxford, Mississippi, made the first order for gathering forces for

the attack on Vicksburg and on the 11th, COLONEL PARSONS was ordered to have transportation at Memphis by the 18th to move General Sherman's army of 40,000 men, with cavalry, artillery and animals to Vicksburg. Notwithstanding the great difficulties involved in collecting the large number of boats necessary, with fuel sufficient for the movement, in the short space of time allowed, the order was carried out, 67 large boats arriving at Memphis on the 18th, besides many smaller transports. Within forty hours the army was embarked and on its way south, and on the 26th was again dis-embarked and ready for the battle of Chickasaw Bayou. After a desperate but unsuccessful engagement of two days, the army, being in a dangerous position, "was re-embarked within sixteen hours, transported more than three hundred miles up the Mississippi and Arkansas Rivers, again landed, fought a successful battle under General McClernand, captured the strong fortification of Arkansas Post, with 7,000 prisoners, destroyed the enemies' works, dispatched its prisoners northward, re-embarked, returned more than 300 miles south and commenced the siege of Vicksburg." During all these movements COLONEL PARSONS took personal charge of the transport fleet, accompanying the army, first as Volunteer Aide on General Sherman's staff, later on the staff of General McClernand who held command at Arkansas Post, and after the commencement of the siege, on General Grant's staff, until he was called North at the end of February.

In connection with his return to the North at this time, an incident occurred, illustrative of General Grant's thoughtfulness and kindness to his subordinate officers. COLONEL PARSONS had especially desired to serve under General Grant and expressing to him his regret that he was called away before Vicksburg was taken, the General quietly answered, "That will not be soon. However, if you would really like to be present, I will try to let you know, so that if your duties will permit, you can come down."

Colonel Parsons attached no importance to this remark but in the latter part of June, he received a letter from General Grant, in which he said, "I think if your duties will permit of your coming down here soon, you will be in time to see the end of the siege." Greatly to Colonel Parsons' regret, however, this was not possible.

A few other brief reports might be given of movements made about this time. In June, 1863, General Burnside's army of 10,000 men, then in central Kentucky, being needed to reinforce General Grant at Vicksburg, "was with its artillery, transported rapidly by rail through a part of Kentucky and Ohio, across Southern Indiana and Illinois to Cairo, where transports were waiting and within four days reached its destination, over 1,000 miles from the point of departure." During this same summer of 1863, the Indians being troublesome on the upper Missouri, one of the largest expeditions ever fitted out by the Government, was sent against them, consisting of about 5,000 men, with several thousand tons of stores, under the command of Generals Sully and Sibley, being transported some 2,000 miles up the Missouri and the Yellowstone, while in the following summer another large body of troops with several thousand tons of supplies was sent to the same point.

During the autumn of 1863, plans began to be made for Sherman's March to the Sea and as he had gathered over 100,000 men near Nashville, the amount of supplies required was enormous, not only for daily consumption for men and animals, but to provide for the future, when his army should be marching through the enemy's country. This difficult problem was given to Colonel Parsons to solve, and he at once began plans for accumulating at Nashville, during the few months in which the Cumberland River was navigable, thousands of tons of every kind of supplies, so that they could be quickly transported as needed during the following summer, to other points in eastern Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia. There being no light draught boats

suitable for use on the rivers, saw-mills were fitted up, a machine shop built at Bridgeport, Alabama, on the upper Tennessee, and within nine months, thirteen steamboats, four of which were partially iron-clad, were completed. The one line of railroad through this section was repaired and equipped, material being brought from the North for the purpose, and large quantities of lumber were sawed to make sheds in which to store the supplies as fast as unloaded. In the meantime there had been gathered at St. Louis, Louisville, Cincinnati and other points in the North, immense quantities of stores, which were pushed forward as soon as navigation opened, pouring into Nashville, so that "by the time the season permitted General Sherman to open the campaign, the store houses were filled and in addition immense stores of forage, grain, and hay were stacked under shelter of tarpaulins as provision against all possible wants." As a result General Sherman's Quartermaster reported that in July, 1864, "the army was 250 miles from Nashville with 100,000 men and 80,000 animals, but notwithstanding this formidable force and its great distance from its base of supplies, connected by a single line of railroad running through mountain fastnesses, liable to be cut at any time, it never suffered for any essential supply but had an abundance of everything needed, from the moment it left Chattanooga to the fall of Atlanta." Another officer writing a few months later to Colonel Parsons, said, "But few will know how to trace Sherman's success and present brilliant prospects to that problem (of transportation) in the solution of which you were the guiding spirit."

In August, 1864, Colonel Parsons was given charge of all rail and river transportation of the Armies of the United States and ordered to Washington, where he was stationed during the remainder of the War. In January, 1865, General Grant desired General Schofield's army brought from Mississippi to aid in the movements around Richmond,

but hesitated to order it, thinking it would be impracticable at that season of the year to safely bring so large a body of men over the mountains and in sufficient time to answer his purpose, forty to sixty days being the shortest period thought possible. Colonel Parsons said he thought it could be done in thirty days, but the army with all its artillery and over 1,000 animals was transported a distance of nearly 1400 miles, during the severest cold of the winter, within an average time of eleven days, or less than seventeen days from the embarkation of the first troops until the arrival of the last in Washington and without loss of property or of a single life. It was this movement which called forth from Secretary Stanton the remark that "it was without a parallel in the history of armies," and which elicited highest praise for the marvels of our transportation service, from English, French and German writers, while as recently as during the Spanish War, a newspaper editorial stated that "the American Civil War still holds the record for transporting a large body of troops, over a long distance in the shortest time."

Colonel Parsons' services in this department had now extended over nearly three years and had been of the most arduous and responsible nature, but, though uniformly successful, they had received no recognition from the Government in the only way in which they could be recognized—by the promotion which his many friends thought he had so richly earned. There had been numerous promotions in his department from the *Regular* Army but few from the *Volunteer* service, and the reason for this was given at a Cabinet Meeting held about this time, an account of which was given to Colonel Parsons as follows:

"Recently, when the subject of the promotion of a Quartermaster to the rank of Brigadier General was being discussed at a Cabinet Meeting, the President mentioned Parsons. Some urged that the promotion should be given to an officer of the Regular Army—that such officers were



Genio B. Parsons

BRIGADIER GENERAL AND CHIEF OF RAIL
AND RIVER TRANSPORTATION.
1865.

regularly educated and trained up in the service for that sort of position and were better fitted by such special training. Mr. Lincoln said, 'That may all be well as to your *stall fed* fellows; but COLONEL PARSONS is about the best *grass fed* Quartermaster we have got. I think he should have the promotion *now*.'"

The opinion of President Lincoln thus expressed in his homely, characteristic manner, was soon put into effect by the following order:

Executive Mansion,
Washington, D. C., March 17, 1865.

Hon. Secretary of War,
Dear Sir:

I have long thought COL. LEWIS B. PARSONS ought to be promoted, and intended it should have been sooner done. His long service and the uniform testimony to the ability with which he has discharged his very responsible and extended duties render it but just and proper his services should be acknowledged, and more especially so, since his great success in executing your orders for the recent movement of Troops from the West.

You will, therefore, at once promote COLONEL PARSONS to the rank of Brigadier General, if there is a vacancy which can be given to the Quartermaster's Department, and if not, you will so promote him when the first vacancy occurs.

Yours truly,
A. LINCOLN.

This resulted soon after in the promotion of COLONEL PARSONS to the rank of Brigadier General.

After the surrender of Lee, GENERAL PARSONS being much out of health from his long continued and incessant duties, tendered his resignation, which Secretary Stanton declined to accept, retaining him in his position while the enormous army of nearly one million men was disbanded, the soldiers transported to their homes, and many matters of detail connected with his department finally settled. He was also at this time ordered to make a draft of army transportation regulations, which subsequently became the basis of all army transportation and it may be interesting to add, in connection with the more recent discussions in

regard to maintaining a larger standing army, that the possibility of this was in the mind of Secretary Stanton, when in October, 1865, GENERAL PARSONS was requested by the Secretary to give his "views as to the proper organization, to adapt the Quartermaster Department to the necessities of a permanent army of 100,000 men."

In May, 1866, when he again tendered his resignation, Secretary Stanton offered him the position of Colonel in the regular army, the highest position which could be given to a Volunteer, saying that Americans were naturally brave and it was not difficult to find good soldiers, but that it was not always easy to secure men of business capacity and talents for organization. GENERAL PARSONS' health was such that he declined this offer, when the Secretary conferred on him the rank of Brevet Major General and he retired after a service of four and a half years with only twenty-one days leave of absence during that time.

Before leaving this period of GENERAL PARSONS' life, an extract is herewith given from an editorial in the New York Times of July 31, 1865, by the celebrated editor, Henry J. Raymond, whom GENERAL PARSONS did not know, but who had been present at the interview between Secretary Stanton and GENERAL PARSONS, after the movement of General Schofield's army and who, therefore, probably wrote at the inspiration of the Secretary himself. Mr. Raymond says, in part:

"No officer of the United States Army could speak with more correct knowledge than GENERAL PARSONS of the numbers and efficiency of the armies of the Union for no one, perhaps, had more experience then he in their organization, subsistence and handling. . . . We venture the assertion that if Secretary Stanton were called on to name the officer who more than any other had distinguished himself in the task of wielding the vast machinery of the Union Armies during all the stages of the conflict, in response to the plans and requirements of our Generals, he would, with little hesitation, designate GENERAL LEWIS B. PARSONS. . . . It is to his matchless combinations that must be attributed much of the efficiency and success that almost invariably marked every military

movement in the West. When the climax of General Grant's Western renown was reached in the battles before Chattanooga and he was transferred to the command of all the armies, with headquarters at Washington, he lost no time in bringing GENERAL (then Colonel) PARSONS to Washington to direct from that center the machinery of which he had become so completely the master. When every department of the public service during the war comes to have its true place in history there will be few with a more brilliant and enduring reputation than GENERAL LEWIS B. PARSONS."

To this may be added the tribute of General Grant in a farewell letter to GENERAL PARSONS, as he was leaving the service. He says:

Head Quarters Armies of the United States,
Washington, D. C., May 20, 1865.

DEAR GENERAL:—

I have long contemplated writing you and expressing my satisfaction with the manner in which you have discharged the very responsible and difficult duties of Superintendent of river and railroad transportation for the armies both in the West and East.

The position is second in importance to no other connected with the military service, and to have been appointed to it at the beginning of a war of the magnitude and duration of this one and holding it to its close, providing transportation for whole armies with all that appertains to them for thousands of miles, adjusting accounts involving millions of money and doing justice to all, never delaying for a moment any military operations dependent upon you, meriting and receiving the commendation of your superior officers and the recognition of Government, for integrity of character and for the able and efficient manner in which you have filled it, evidences an honesty of purpose, knowledge of men, business intelligence and executive ability of the highest order, and of which any man ought to be justly proud. Wishing you a speedy return to health and duty, I remain,

Yours truly,

U. S. GRANT,
Lt. Gen.

When finally relieved from service, GENERAL PARSONS' health was found to be so seriously affected that his physicians ordered entire rest and arranging his private affairs as rapidly as possible, he went abroad in the following year, accompanied by his oldest daughter. The next two years

were spent most delightfully in traveling in Europe, as fas as Eastern Russia, thence to Constantinople, through Egypt and the Holy Land, returning to America in the autumn of 1869.

General Parsons now took up his residence in St. Louis and in the following year he married Miss Elizabeth Darrah of New York City. He again became interested in business, being a Director in the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad, now the Baltimore & Ohio Southwestern; as also a Director in the St. Louis, Kansas City and Northern, now a part of the Wabash system; and for three years also the President of a Bank in St. Louis.

In 1873 occurred the death of his oldest daughter in Minnesota after a long illness, followed in January, 1875, by the death in Colorado, of his oldest son, a young man of great promise, a graduate of Yale in the class of 1872 and universally beloved and respected by his classmates and friends. Crushed by these sorrows, broken in health and having experienced business reverses, General Parsons determined to go to the country and in the spring of 1875 returned to Illinois, making his home on the farm at Flora which he had owned since 1855, and where he continued to reside during the following thirty-two years.

His life, though now a quiet one in comparison to that of the previous years, was not lacking in occupation. He again became interested in politics, having never renounced his Democratic principles, although strongly urged to change his party, especially during the administration of Gen. Grant, but always responding to such solicitations that "if principles counted for anything they should do so in politics as well as elsewhere." In 1876, he took an active part in the election of Governor Tilden, being on the State Central Committee and giving his entire time to conducting the campaign in Illinois and on that eventful 5th of March, 1877, when Hayes was being sworn in as

President, spending the morning with Governor Tilden at his home in New York.

In 1877 he was elected President of the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad but in the following year, when the road passed into the control of the Baltimore & Ohio, he retired.

In 1878 he was urged to accept the nomination for Congress, but though his nomination would have been equivalent to an election, he declined, not caring for public office. Two years later, however, his friends throughout Illinois so strongly urged him to accept the nomination for Governor, that he consented, provided that Judge Lyman Trumbull who was his choice for the nomination should positively refuse to accept it. When the convention met, Judge Trumbull was nominated but immediately declined and in a most eulogistic speech nominated General Parsons. He in turn refused the nomination for himself, seconding that of Judge Trumbull, who was finally induced to accept, General Parsons being then nominated for Lieutenant Governor. During the following months of the political campaign they traveled together throughout the State and though they were unsuccessful at the election, the renewal of a friendship begun in the days when General Parsons first commenced to practice law before the Illinois bar, was a great pleasure to him, continuing with frequent correspondence until the death of Judge Trumbull.

In 1884, General Parsons was much interested in the Presidential Election, was a delegate to the National Democratic Convention, and it was largely through his influence that the Illinois delegation united on Cleveland, rendering his nomination possible. In 1893 he was a delegate to the State Convention which nominated John P. Altgeld for Governor, and after the election, was appointed President of the Board of Trustees of the Soldiers' Home in Quincy, an office which brought him much pleasure, recalling as it did, the active military service of earlier years,

and which he retained during the four years of Governor Altgeld's administration.

This was the last public position with which he was connected, but it by no means followed that even at the age of nearly 80 years he ceased to feel an active interest in the affairs of State or Nation, for as long as he lived, his keen mind with its broad comprehensive vision, watched the progress of events not only at home, but throughout the world, while his firm faith in the ultimate triumph of truth and righteousness kept him in sympathy with the younger generations and prevented the pessimism natural to old age.

The development of his large farm from an open uncultivated prairie, had caused him to take deep interest in everything connected with agriculture and in 1877 being then President of the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad, he delivered an address before the State Dairymen's Association on "Transportation, as connected with production and exchange," for which his large experience in such matters, peculiarly fitted him. In the present day when the great question of proper Railroad control, either under Government supervision or with absolute Government ownership, is being so earnestly discussed, it is interesting to read the remedies then suggested by General Parsons, for the evils only beginning, but whose increase he foresaw, when he said the time might be coming when the question would have to be decided whether the Government would possess the railroads, or the railroads possess the Government, while the general principles he laid down as a basis for such remedies as would prevent either alternative are so broad and wise that they are as applicable to the present situation, as to that of thirty years ago. In his own immediate neighborhood he was always interested in everything that would be of benefit or would tend to improve and beautify the country, and he gave to the town of Flora at different times over 5,000 shade trees, raised in his nurseries to be



ELMWOOD FARM.

FLORA, ILLINOIS.

planted along the streets of the town, while on his own property he planted many more thousands, both of shade and fruit trees.

In the early days of his first coming to Illinois he had identified himself with the Presbyterian Church in Alton, then under the charge of the Rev. A. T. Norton, well known as the "Father of Presbyterianism in Southern Illinois," and after his removal to Flora in 1875, the Presbyterian Church there became an object of especial interest to him, and in the absence of a regular pastor, he often conducted the services and read the sermon.

The subject of education had been dear to him since the brave struggle he made for it in his own College days and when his Father died in 1855, leaving his property for founding an educational institution in Iowa, the son, with his two brothers, accepted the trust. The College was opened in Fairfield, Iowa, in 1875, bearing the family name and from that time became to General Parsons an object of unremitting care through the remainder of his life, and his annual visits were considered by him a sacred duty, as well as a great pleasure. His love for his own Alma Mater, Yale, never ceased, and his frequent visits to New Haven for class reunions were occasions of much enjoyment, when he seemed to renew his youth, while he kept up a correspondence with some members of his class until the last year of his life. After meeting him at a Yale reunion in 1901 President Hadley wrote him: "Nothing in all my visits to Yale Alumni Associations gives me more pleasure in the remembrance than your charming speech at the Alumni dinner in St. Louis and your yet more charming personal conversation."

General Parsons also greatly enjoyed meeting old army friends and was a member of the Grand Army of the Republic, of the Loyal Legion and Vice-President of the Society of the Army of the Tennessee, as also a mem-

ber of the Societies of Colonial Wars and of the Sons of the Revolution.

He had always, since the close of the war, longed to see a restoration of kindly understanding and sympathy between the North and the South. And when a subscription was being raised to erect a monument in Chicago to the Confederate dead, he sent a contribution, accompanied by a letter expressing his deep interest in the success of the undertaking.

The year 1887 brought him a great sorrow in the death of his beloved wife, leaving of his family only two children, a daughter, who lived with him in his home and a son, who resided in Colorado, both of whom survived him.

During the last twenty years of his life he spent his winters largely in Florida, varying them with trips to California and Mexico, while the summers generally found him at his home in Flora. On New Years Day, 1907, at the request of the Grand Army Post in Flora, he met the old soldiers at their rooms and for the last time talked over the days of the past, when they were all in their different ways, working together for the same great end. With a voice as strong and clear as in his younger days and with his old-time vigor, he spoke for two hours of the part he had taken in the struggle, his hearers listening with the deepest attention and at the close, to his surprise and pleasure he was presented with a chair in memory of the occasion. Though fully retaining his mental vigor, the last few years had brought increasing feebleness of body, most patiently and uncomplainingly borne, and it had seemed at times, as if only his indomitable will enabled him to retain his hold on life. He expressed a wish to live for his 89th birthday on April 5th, but on March 16th, after an illness of only a few days, the brave, tireless soul answered the roll-call and freed from the increasing limitations of the body, passed into the fuller, richer life, which he felt assured was awaiting him.

On one of the last days, his mind wandered back to the past and he was again giving directions for the transportation of armies and ordering that the trains should not be moved so rapidly, lest the lives of the soldiers might be endangered. So it was fitting that in the final simple services rendered in his honor, in the town with which he had been so long identified, he should rest for a few hours in the church he had so faithfully served, watched by representatives of the men who had fought with him and covered by the flag he had loved.

A Service Held by the Trustees and Faculty

of

Parsons College

Fairfield, Iowa

In Memory Of

General Lewis B. Parsons,

June 2, 1907.

In Memoriam.

Lewis Baldwin Parsons,
1818-1907

First Presbyterian Church,
Fairfield, Iowa,

June Second, Nineteen Hundred
Seven.

"Know ye that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel."

ORDER OF SERVICE.

Organ Voluntary.
Hymn—"Now the Laborer's Task is O'er."
Invocation.
Psalm Ninety.
Address:
Rev. Ezra B. Newcomb, D. D., Keokuk.
Vocal Duet—"Jesus Lover of My Soul;"—*Lassan.*
Address:
W. E. Blake, Esq., Burlington.
Resolutions:
W. G. Ross, Esq., Fairfield, Iowa.
Hymn—"The Sands of Time are Sinking:"—No. 518.
Benediction.
"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

ADDRESS

BY

Rev. E. B. Newcomb, D. D., of Keokuk, Iowa.

Lewis Parsons (afterward taking the full name of his father, Lewis Baldwin Parsons) was born at Oak Orchard, on Lake Ontario, in Genesee Co., N. Y., April 5th, 1818. He died at Flora, Illinois, March 16th, 1907.

During the century within which the most of his life was spent, there were such changes, not only in the external aspects of this country, but in all the conditions of human life, as were never before seen in a similar period of the world's history. At its opening men were living much as they had lived for thirty generations. With scant changes, they were traveling by the same means, they were communicating with each other by the same methods, they were providing food from the same sources, they were clothing themselves by the same processes, as men had known for a millenium.

Within that century there was more of advancement, improvement, absolute gain in the way of the world's life than had been witnessed in the thousand years previous.

The United States passed from the position of a struggling government, a sparse settlement of the country East of the Alleghanies and the lakes, and a mere experiment in Democracy, to become not only a world power, but in many respects the most influential among the nations of men. The flag which had scarce fluttered beyond the Mississippi became the symbol of the new nation's authority not only from sea to sea, but from Porto Rico to the Philippines; and in every chancellory of the world the voice of America was listened for with earnest attention, and no great movement would be undertaken until America had spoken.

When Lewis Parsons was born there was not a steam printing press in America. He was ten years old when the first passenger traveled on a steam railway. He was a man grown when the first telegraphic message went over the wire. He had reached three score when the telephone began to speak across the intervals of separation. He was almost an old man when the electric car first carried passengers, and he had reached four-score ere horseless carriages and wireless telegrams found their way through unchartered space without the guidance of seen assistances.

These things which have become the common-places of today were scarcely in the dreams of men when he was born.

It is no slight task to estimate the power of a man who lived within that period, with his life open to the influences of the great movements which make the nineteenth century the most memorable in the annals of humanity. And his life was open to these influences. He did not stand apart from these strong currents of human deed and destiny, nor was he a small figure, even among the great men of this great era.

Today it falls to me to tell somewhat of this man, in whose memory this service is appropriately held, in this place where he has been no stranger these thirty years.

Lewis Parsons traced his paternal ancestry to that "Cornet" Joseph Parsons, who in 1636 was living at the Indian town of Agawam, now Springfield, Mass.—a man of prominence and influence in all that region, a man of industry and enterprise, who became one of the largest land owners in the Connecticut valley. He, with others, laid out the town of Northampton, Mass.; and a company which he organized purchased more than 10,000 acres of land, on a part of which they located the town of Northfield, Massachusetts, where now stand the buildings of the schools and associated enterprises founded by D. L. Moody. Later he was a property owner, and resident of Boston, and a member of the oldest military organization in America, the

Ancient and Honorable Artillery, whose armory and museum are now in Faneuil Hall. He served in the French and Indian War, and was otherwise prominent, in the affairs of the colony. It is said of him in Savage's History of Massachusetts that "he was the most enterprising man in the Connecticut valley for a quarter of a century."

His great-great-grandson, Capt. Chas. Parsons, served in the Revolutionary army from Oct., 1775, before the Declaration of Independence, until peace was declared in 1783, having part in the heroic events of Ticonderoga, Valley Forge, Monmouth, and the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. His fifth child was Lewis Baldwin Parsons, father of him whose memory we celebrate in this service, who himself until middle life bore the name of Lewis Parsons only, but then took the full name of his father, Lewis Baldwin Parsons, by which he was subsequently known.

On the mother's side, as well as his father's, his progenitors, in the Hoare family, were of that same earnest and honorable New England lineage; and to those who knew him well it was not difficult to see the survival and the outcropping of the characteristics of the stern and sturdy stock of Pilgrim and Puritan, which has given to this land a heritage of ideas, ideals, and energy which have been a most effective agency in its development along the highest lines of conception, endeavor and achievement.

At the age of fourteen, the family then living in the village of Gouverneur, N. Y., he was assistant to his father in the country store of the latter and attending school. Two years later he was teaching a school in the Thousand Island region, and despite his juvenility and inexperience, he was able to secure and retain the respect and confidence of his pupils, many of them older than the teacher. Sixty years later it was his delight to revisit this place, to find the school-house still standing, and two of his former pupils yet living in the neighborhood and remembering him distinctly.

At the age of seventeen he was called to face the problem of what he should endeavor to make of his life, having choice of an interest in the business of the father, or his assistance, to the total extent of $500, toward the expense of a college education. The choice was not long in the balance. Immediately the youth began with enthusiastic and earnest application to prepare himself for a college entrance. He had almost no assistance, for no one in the vicinity was competent to give it. He afterward deeply regretted that he had been so scantily prepared; yet undiscouraged by this limitation, he but gave added diligence and application to his college studies, to overcome the handicap.

For no special reason that he was able to remember, he selected Yale as the college which he should attend, and entered the freshman class in 1836, at the age of eighteen. Over-application to his work, with perhaps too great economy in his manner of living, led to ill health, which with the deficient preparation for the course made it so exceedingly difficult for him to keep a satisfactory standing with his class that he was tempted to abandon college altogether. But with a characteristic courage and determination, he persevered against all the obstacles, and he afterward said of this period and these trials, "Having determined to graduate, my ambition sustained me in the effort, and though I could not secure the standing I desired, yet I believe it was such as to gain for me the respect of instructors and classmates and their kindly regard through life. I never have regretted my persistence. The training I secured, the tastes then formed, the life-long friendships of so many men of influence and high character, with many of whom my relations have been intimate, have been sources of great enjoyment."

Graduating in the class of 1840, he had the not uncommon experience of facing life and its problems with no capital but a debt, a diploma—and a determination. Following the example of many other Northern college graduates of

those days, he decided to go to the South and teach school for a time, the compensation being much better in that section than in the North. Going first to New Orleans, he found no satisfactory employment, and the added danger of yellow fever led him to seek another location. After many vicissitudes, both encouraging and disheartening, he found near Gainesville, Ala., a school which gave him a remuneration of more than $1,000 per year, in addition to living expenses. After teaching for about eighteen months, ill health compelled a change of climate, and he returned to the paternal home in New York, by way of the Mississippi River and the great lakes.

The proceeds of his teaching enabled him to discharge his college indebtedness, and with his remaining funds he entered Harvard Law School for a two-year term of study, Judge Story and Prof. Greenleaf—memorable names—being then of the faculty.

In 1844, his course completed, and his money exhausted, he borrowed $600.00, purchased a small law library and set his face toward the West in search of what fortune and fate might yield him in his life struggle. Going via Washington City, he there spent some time in studying governmental conditions, and had the great pleasure and privilege of listening to the congressional debates, participated in by such men as Webster, Clay, Benton, McDuffie, and Silas Wright. At this time and under such influences, he says "I formed the political views and principles which I have never seen reason for changing, though in taking sides with the Democracy, I varied from the education and views of my father and all the family."

St. Louis was then the attractive point in the West for many an ambitious young man of the East, and it drew Lewis Parsons. But his introduction was by no means encouraging, nor the welcome kindly, to the stranger. Of his initial experience there, he says, "I landed with but ten cents in my pocket, with which I induced an expressman to take

my trunk to the Planters Hotel, thus leaving me 'flat broke' and a thousand miles from home, in a city of 27,000 people, and containing but one man whom I had ever seen—and whose name I had forgotten." Fortunately he was able to find this man—John Cavender—and by his kindness had such temporary assistance as was needed.

A combination of happy circumstances led him almost immediately to an acquaintance with the distinguished lawyer, N. D. Strong, of Alton, Ill., brother to Justice Strong, long of the Supreme Court, who offered to the young graduate of Yale and Harvard a partnership, an offer most gladly accepted and the partnership proved satisfactory from every point of view. This partnership was dissolved after three years by the removal of Mr. Strong from the city. Ten years afterwards, when recalling these earlier days, Mr. Parsons expressed to Mr. Strong his surprise that he should have admitted him to a partnership on an acquaintance of only a day, he was answered, "I knew you were a graduate of Yale and Harvard. We spent an evening together in general conversation, discussing among other things, college expenses, about which neither of the other three men, Yale graduates, could give any information, while you had exact figures. I had no business judgment, and when you made your statement, I thought you would do your share of the work—as you did, for never in my practice have I had so much money at my command and with so little trouble."

This sort of exactness was ever marked in Gen. Parsons. If he knew a thing he knew it all around and through and through. At the end of a period of ten years he had accumulated property to the amount of about $50,000, besides more than 2,000 acres of Illinois land, which could then be purchased with land warrants at not more than $1.00 per acre.

In 1847 he married Sarah, daughter of Dr. B. F. Edwards, a leading physician of St. Louis, Mo. The happi-

ness of the married life was soon broken by the death of the wife in 1850. Two years later he married a younger daughter of Dr. Edwards, Julia Maria, who died in 1857.

A son and daughter by the first marriage died in early manhood and womanhood. Two children of the second marriage, a son and daughter survive the father, and were the comfort and cheer of his later years.

Soon after the second marriage the family removed to St. Louis, where among other professional engagements Mr. Parsons became attorney for the banking house of Page & Bacon, which was financing the construction of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad. The failure of the bankers, in the panic of 1857, threw upon their attorney an immense burden of responsibility and work. He gave himself wholeheartedly to the task of saving what might be saved from the wreck, and securing the completion of the railway. As attorney, director and manager he so linked himself with this great enterprise that his name cannot be omitted from the list of the captains of industry of that pioneer period in railway construction. There is not time to tell here the story of his labors in behalf of this, one of the most important enterprises in the development of the Mississippi valley, and its commercial connection with the East. But among the romantic and heroic stories of railway construction in the United States, this would be well worth the telling. While acting as attorney for the road, there was selected as vice-president, the distinguished young West Point graduate, George B. McClellan, of whom the nation and the world were to hear much a little later and to whom Mr. Parsons became warmly attached. Resigning his position in 1860, Mr. Parsons purposed to give himself the pleasure and benefit of a needed change, by rest and foreign travel.

But that was a time when plans were rudely interrupted by the breaking of the storm of war. While an ardent Democrat in politics, Mr. Parsons had no hesitation as to the stand which he should take in this crisis. Although past

the age for military duty, he tendered his services to Gen. McClellan, and was offered a position on his staff. He was indisposed to accept this, preferring rather to return to the West and raise a regiment for active service at the front, but under the persuasion of Gen. McClellan and Post-Master General Montgomery Blair, he temporarily accepted a staff appointment, with assignment to duty in St. Louis, as a member of a commission for the examination of a mass of war claims, already accumulated under Freemont's administration, a position for which his legal knowledge and his executive ability specially fitted him. Capt. Philip H. Sheridan, afterward the distinguished cavalry commander, was president of this commission. In connection with this service, Capt. Parsons, formed an acquaintance which ripened with years into a lasting personal friendship, with David Davis, who became one of the great figures in national affairs, judge of the U. S. Supreme Court, and U. S. Senator.

The problem of railway transportation for the suddenly increased army and its supplies became immediately pressing, on the outbreak of the war. The old methods which sufficed for an army of 13,000 broke down under the strain of transporting hundreds of thousands. Because of his practical acquaintance with transportation matters through his railway service, Capt. Parsons was directed by General Allen then in charge in St. Louis to report on the conditions and needs of the transportation department. Succeeding in bringing order out of chaos, and suggesting new rules and methods, which were approved and adopted for further administration, he was very soon put in charge of this department, and a little later the river transportation was added to his duties. Here the conditions were even more chaotic than in connection with the railways. The confusion and extravagance which had grown up under Freemont's administration of affairs was beyond expression. The sudden and radical reforms introduced by Capt. Par-

sons brought upon him the enmity and abuse of the river men who had been profiting so largely by the inefficiency of the old system, or want of system. The Government was being outrageously overcharged for confused and dilatory service and this condition was not easily changed to one of efficiency, economy and business methods. But the change was effected, thereby saving the Government millions of dollars, and securing the performance of the work in a manner and measure never before equalled in the transportation of men, munitions and supplies.

What is said to have been the most notable feat of transportation ever accomplished was performed under the immediate and personal supervision of Gen. Parsons in January, 1865. Gen. Grant before Richmond needed a reinforcement of troops then in the West, but it was considered practically impossible to transport so large a body of men, with munitions and supplies, at that time of the year, so great a distance. General Parsons personally took charge of the movement. Within seventeen days he had transferred an army of more than 20,000 men, with all its artillery and more than 1,000 horses, from the upper waters of the Tennessee River to Washington City, a distance of over 1,400 miles in the severest weather of the year, by boat and train, over rivers and mountains blocked with snow and ice, without the loss of a single life or any property. It was testified that this was the most remarkable and successful movement of its kind in history, and English military authorities assented to this judgment, "provided the facts were correctly stated." So remarkable was the feat that they were inclined to doubt whether it could have occurred as stated. Secretary Stanton said to General Parsons on the completion of the work, "Your success is without a parallel in history."

It was Capt. Lewis B. Parsons who took charge of the transportation problem. It was Brigadier and Brevet-Major General Parsons who laid it down at the close of

the war, having solved it so successfully and satisfactorily as to receive the highest testimonials from President Lincoln and Gens. Grant and Sherman, as well as the thanks of Congress for his distinguished services.

Because his duties did not call him to the line of battle, where he would have been glad to take his place, but to the less heroic and spectacular station, his name did not become famous as those of other men whose services were of less value. But if it be true that the efficiency of a fighting force depends on the promptness and safety of its movements, and the sufficiency of its supplies, then a large part of the success of the armies, especially those of the West under Grant and Sherman, must be properly credited to the absolute and remarkable energy of General Parsons, in charge of the transportation of the armies by rail and river, within the territory from the Alleghanies to the Rockies, and from the lower Mississippi to the Falls of St. Anthony, and the headwaters of the Missouri; and from 1864, in charge of this department of service in the entire country. During the year 1865, its cost was nearly $50,000,000 and GENERAL PARSONS was the administrative head and the active supervisor of it all.

General Sherman said in a personal letter: "I take pleasure in adding my testimony to the great skill and good management which marked the Quarter-Master Department in handling the large armies and the vast supplies during the Western campaigns. I more especially recall the fact that you collected at Memphis, in Dec. 1862, enough boats to transport 40,000 men with full equipment and stores, on less than a week's notice, and subsequently that you supplied an army of 100,000 men operating near Vicksburg for six months, without men or horses being in want for a single day."

And I quote in full a personal letter from Gen. Grant, dated May 20, 1865: "I have long contemplated writing you, and expressing my satisfaction with the manner in

which you discharged the very responsible and difficult duties of Superintendent of river and rail transportation in the West and East.

"The position is second in importance to no other connected with the military service; and to have been appointed to it at the beginning of a war of the magnitude and duration of this one, and holding it to its close, providing transportation for whole armies, with all that appertains to them, for thousands of miles; adjusting accounts involving millions of money and doing justice to all; never delaying for a moment any military operations dependent upon you; meriting and receiving the commendation of your superior officers and the recognition of the Government, for integrity of character, and for the able and efficient manner in which you have filled it, evidences an honesty of purpose, knowledge of men, business intelligence and executive ability of the highest order, and of which any man ought to be justly proud."

The Government's appreciation of his service was shown by his promotion immediately from captain to colonel, passing over the intermediate ranks. Upon the special written order of President Lincoln he was made Brigadier General, and Secretary Stanton was personally interested in conferring the brevet grade of Major General upon him for distinguished service, and tendered him a high position in the regular army, an offer which was declined, since General Parsons did not care to be permanently connected with army life.

Significant of the spirit of the man and his service, is the story of his first interview with General Halleck, to whom he was ordered to report when assigned to the department of transportation. Halleck loved to surround himself with "the pomp and panoply of war" and was disposed to be reserved in his manner and dictatorial in his methods with his official subordinates. He asked Capt. Parsons arrogantly, "How soon can you send 4,000 men to Cairo?"

The time was midwinter, the river full of floating ice which threatened at any moment to block the channel and make the river impassable. Capt. Parsons began to say, "I can send them by river if—" when Halleck interposed, "I want no 'ifs.' I asked how soon you could do it." Angered by the manner of the answer, and looking his superior officer squarely in the face, Capt. Parsons said, "If you are God Almighty, sir, you can talk without 'ifs;' I can't." Those who knew General Parsons, and have marked the set of his jaw, can imagine the emphasis with which he said this, and are not surprised to be told that General Halleck and his staff took notice of this new man with whom they were to have dealings.

General Parsons was mustered out of the service in 1866. Thenceforward his life was spent in the quiet pursuits of a country gentleman upon his estate of Elmwood, consisting of more than 2,000 acres near Flora, Illinois. Married to Elizabeth Darrah, in New York in 1869, he was again bereaved by her death in 1887, after nearly twenty years of delightful companionship.

I do not speak in detail of the incidents of this later, quieter period of the life of our friend, for I have thought to tell you of the years which we knew little of, before he came into connection with this community. Through these later years he has been a frequent and welcome visitor in this city, because of the part he has taken in establishing and maintaining here the College which his father's thoughtful generosity made possible. During all its history he has been its firm friend, its constant officer, its invaluable adviser. He and others of the family—notably Col. Charles Parsons—have added much to the original gift of the father, and it is their combined generosity which has laid the College foundations so broad and deep that we anticipate nothing but an increasing strength and usefulness for this institution which bears the family name, and is the child of the family love and prayer.

But although General Parsons retired from former business pursuits his residence at Flora, was not inactive. The administration of his estate of thousands of acres, the rearing of prize cattle, the care of his orchards which were famous beyond the limits of his own commonwealth and his hearty interest in all public movements gave employment to a mind and heart which could never be idle.

With the larger phases of politics he was ever conversant and co-operative. He was the friend and adviser of leading men of his own party, but a friend as well of men of opposite political faith. He numbered among them at different times such leaders as Lincoln, Douglas, Grant, Logan, Lyman Trumbull, David Davis, Melville W. Fuller, C. H. McCormick, John M. Palmer, Richard Yates and others.

In 1876 he declined to allow his name to be presented as a candidate for the Congressional nomination in his district. In 1880 he was the choice of many for the Gubernatorial nomination, and allowed his name to be used, though he himself preferred the nomination of Lyman Trumbull who declined to be a candidate, himself supporting the nomination of General Parsons. The convention, however, insisted on nominating Trumbull, with the cordial support of Parsons, and the latter was named by acclamation as second on the ticket, entering heartily into the campaign even though he knew that a Democratic success was an impossibility.

In looking through his personal scrap-book, which has many pages of newspaper commendation of him and his candidacy at this period, I find, significant of his modesty, the pencilled comment, in his own hand, "Lots of trash along here."

In the National Convention which nominated Cleveland in 1884 he was a delegate, and again in 1896. From 1895 to 1898 he was President of the governing board of the Illinois Soldiers and Sailors Home, and in accepting his

resignation from this position, Gov. Altgeld wrote, "I regret to see you sever your connection with the great institution which you have helped to place on such a high plane of excellence. Actuated by the most loyal and patriotic motives, you have rendered invaluable service to the people of this state."

He showed a certain appreciation of the value of personal connection with Societies which seek to conserve the patriotic achievements of the past and cultivate present thoughtful citizenship, by his membership in the Grand Army of the Republic, the Loyal Legion, the Society of the Army of the Tennessee, the Sons of the American Revolution and the Society of Colonial Wars, to the work of all of which he gave attention and support.

Through these later years he maintained an active interest in his Alma Mater, Yale, and was an honored figure in such College occasions as he was able to attend. He continued a correspondence, and a personal acquaintance with some of the members of his Yale Class of 1840, and the Harvard Law Class of 1844.

He was greatly interested in the town of Flora, near which was his home, and this interest manifested itself, among other ways, in the gift to the town of more than 5,000 young shade trees from his nurseries, for planting in the streets of the town. He was universally recognized as the foremost man of his section, and was honored as such by his neighbors. On the occasion of his 85th birthday there was a notable manifestation of the esteem in which he was held. The whole town, and vicinity visited him at his home, and gave him every evidence of the honor and friendship felt toward him by all classes and ages. He was ever interested in young men and encouraged many of them to attempt to make more of themselves by education and development than they would have thought possible without his assistance, given in his sympathy not only, but in more material ways. What one of them wrote to him recently

might have been duplicated in many instances. "It was not so much the financial help—though that was everything to me; it was the encouragement that such a man as yourself thought me worth helping. When you pointed out the forward path, and then removed the barriers, and made the rough places smooth that I might walk therein, I could but strive not to disappoint such hopes"

It has been a great privilege to read some of the correspondence of these years, and to know how widely his influence has gone, and how he was appreciated by the friends of his youth and his old age alike. His last years were such as to make a benediction for a useful life. Surrounded by those who as neighbors loved and honored him, maintaining an active connection with enterprises of the church and education, not rusting out by inaction, but ever busy in the endeavor to make his life count for the most possible to the very end, endeavoring to be helpful to his loved ones, and to the interest of the Kingdom of God, which had long commanded his prayers and service, he waited for the coming of the messenger who should summon him to other fields of activity. Neither hasting toward, nor holding from the hour of his departure, he showed how old age may be dignified and beautified by the spirit with which it faces the continuing present and the approaching future.

As indicative of the conditions of these closing years, I must ask leave to quote from a few of the many touching letters which it has been my privilege to read.

Chief Justice Peters of Maine, a class-mate at Harvard wrote him in 1903: "Do you know, my dear PARSONS, what, more than anything else, has given you consideration among your citizens? It is just two things—ability and integrity, integrity of the most positive kind."

One whom he had incited to higher ideals and better living as a young man, wrote, "You fed my mind when it was very hungry—and food was scarce."

Bishop Tuttle, of Missouri, wrote him in 1903, "You are ready, like a soldier to answer the roll call 'Ad Sum,' ready, simply from childlike faith in Him who atones and saves. But you are ready also, if He wills, to go on and do somewhat more for Him and for your fellowmen."

A month before his death, Rev. W. P. Hosken, a former pastor wrote, "I never appreciated the religion of Jesus Christ more than the hour I spent with you, standing on the threshold of the great Beyond, yet calm and confident that all is well."

So he waited. And when the end came, he "fell asleep" as gently as a little child surrenders itself to the beatings of the mother's heart and the clasp of the mother's arms, and is at rest.

In estimating the character and achievements of General Parsons, let us recall at least some of the things most manifest and significant. He was the perpetuation of that type of the New England faith, courage, industry, persistence, which so nobly influenced the formation of our national spirit and accomplishment. Conscience was ever his commander. Difficulty or danger never deterred from duty.

His affection for and loyalty to his father's memory, to his brothers, and to his children, was a passion with him. Remembering a patriotic and godly ancestry, he was ever moved by the spirit of "noblesse oblige," and endeavored to live worthy of his forbears. And feeling that they and he were to live in his children, he ever encouraged and incited them to a high ideal of the significance of life here and hereafter. Called to endure unusual sorrows and disappointments in the death of those dearest to him, he never wavered from the faith that God was the fittest administrator of his destinies, nor failed to look to Him in childlike love and trust, as well as humble surrender.

He was a typical American in his courage to attempt new duties when summoned to them, and in his ability to adjust himself successfully to the perplexing problems which

the duties involved. Preparing himself for the law—and proving the fullness of his preparation—he found his greatest duties and his highest successes along the lines of business management and administrative functions, as banker, railway constructor and president, and army officer in charge of transportation problems larger and more difficult than had ever faced a man in similar position in all the history of warfare.

He was a humble, sincere, Christian man, withal, and above all. He was ever ready to bear his part in the work of the Kingdom. By his conversation, his correspondence and his conduct he emphasized the thought that this life is but the preparation for another and greater, and that present duties must be discharged in the fear of God and the anticipation of eternity; this life has constant outlook and should have constant uplift toward that other. He quoted with sincere approval, "The man who gets no new horizon is a pitiable creature. The only philosophy which is of any real value, is the kind which can lift you above the circle of petty passions, jealousies or rivalries in which you are moving, and show you a larger horizon of grander passions and deeper motives, to serve a higher and more ultimate purpose."

When past eighty years of age he wrote to his children, "While our earthly life is brief, its results are beyond comprehension. Its object must be the formation of character for another existence, commencing at the gates of death. May we have so lived that we shall look back and see that we have sought as the general tenor of our lives, to act justly, to do rightly and to show our love for our Creator by seeking to do good to our fellow-creatures."

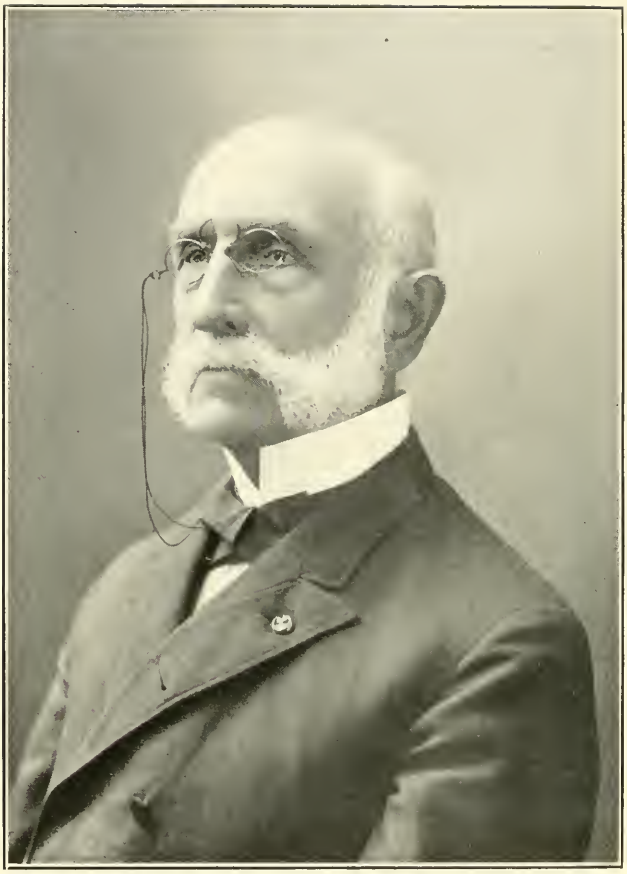
And this, but a little earlier, "Dante wrote, 'Thus I believe, thus I affirm, thus I am certain it is, that from this life I shall pass to another, bettter.' Browning writes, 'I ever see more and more reason to hold by the same hope.' For over half a century such has been my increasing faith.

At past seventy-six years, faith and judgment assert, it is, it must be so."

And when, at the age of almost ninety years, he passed from this certainty of faith to the certainty of experience, he left the world distinctly the poorer for his going, for the value of such a life is beyond computation. And were it not that we believe that "he being dead yet speaketh" we would sorrow without compensation for our grief. Well did one say of him when he had gone, "He lived apparently so much in the world beyond, that the change seems less to him than any one I ever knew."

And one of the little children said, when told that he was dead, "He always made me think of the Bible." Verily out of the mouths of babes is praise perfected.

Do you know of a higher eulogy, a better epitaph, for any man than that?



LEWIS B. PARSONS.

1892.

ADDRESS

OF

W. E. BLAKE OF BURLINGTON, IOWA.

Strangely, indeed, it has fallen to me to speak of the personal traits of GENERAL PARSONS.

I met him first some thirty years ago in 1879 while we were both in attendance upon the sessions of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church at Saratoga. Little then did I dream that our acquaintance would continue or become intimate. That same year died President Armstrong, who was with us at Saratoga, and GENERAL PARSONS seemed thereafter and thereby, to have an awakened knowledge of the necessity of more accurate over-sight of the affairs, and a feeling of greater responsibility for the life, development and permanency of Parsons College. From that date I frequently met GENERAL PARSONS, and have been on terms of intimacy and association which gave me some opportunity to observe the man.

As an individual he was a man of dominant mentality, but not offensively so as a member of a body, nor toward his associates therein. He had a strong conviction that his opinions were correct, and had the language and the courage to announce them, yet he made no ill feeling in so doing, for he allowed to others the same freedom of opinion which he took to himself, and when the problem reached a solution, he accepted the result and started again.

There are three traits which I shall mention this afternoon in speaking in memory of the grand old man who has gone home just a little in advance of us, his associates.

First, he was a man of simple sincerity.

He had ideals—high ideals, which he desired should be the lines of travel of the affairs of the College in all its de-

partments, yet he traveled in straight lines and in the open in trying to reach the same.

Sincerity in life is a wonderfully influential trait in moulding and swaying the opinions of others. We lawyers have no complaint to make of the Judge who rules against us, if his rulings are sincere; if he be sincere and honest in his convictions of duty or decisions, we are not only silenced, but esteem at once arises in the mind. It seems to be almost an axiom of everyday living that an honestly sincere man, must be right, and so we respect him and his opinions.

The friendship of General Parsons was sincere, without adulation, without demonstration, yet you knew if you were permitted to enter the inner circle of personal friendship; to such he opened his heart, talked over his plans, showed you his prized relics and keepsakes, and made you feel that you were on terms of real and valued friendship.

He had lived in three generations, the first until he was thirty years old, as a boy, a student, a Western Pioneer; the second from 30 to 60, he was a practitioner, promoter of early railroad building and a soldier. The last thirty years of life to him were equally active, but in the quieter walks of life.

To talk with him of his boyhood, as a student, as a pioneer, was like reading a biography. To talk with him of his years of experience in railroad building was interesting, but to listen to the story of his part in our Civil War, to hold in your own hand and read with your own eyes original letters of Secretary Stanton, General Grant and Abraham Lincoln, was enchanting.

General Parsons was a wonderfully important factor in that struggle, as transportation quickly and safely planned and performed is as indispensable as arms and ammunition to success in times of war, and this was his part, and so well was it done, that our armies were victorious, our Union

was saved, and he had the right to be justly proud of his glorious part therein. Yet, in all this he was simply "sincere."

There was another trait of our departed brother, which I observed, and for want of ability to coin any better word for it, I shall term it "filial loyalty." He had an intense feeling of fidelity to what his father had said, and his father's bequests and directions. Of course, part of this can be accounted for by professional training, as to the lawyer every word has a meaning, and a request in a will is like the laws of the Medes and Persians, unalterable.

But General Parsons' loyalty was more than professional, it was filial; he thought and acted and insisted that certain things should be done, not simply because it was a bequest in a will, but because it was in his father's will.

Sometimes his associates thought that he interpreted so closely to the letter that he was in danger of strangling the purpose of the bequest, but because of his deep filial regard for the memory of his father, we were hushed and not a word of criticism was spoken.

I tell you my listeners, there must have been an inherent worth and nobility in that father that such affectionate regard for his words was ineffaceably stamped upon the memory and conduct of this son, this son who had roughed with pioneer, mingled in forensic struggles, associated with statesmen and warriors in times which tried men's souls, and caused the forgetting and obliterating of ties of affection; who could be and was the companion of Legislators, Generals and Presidents, than whom earth has not produced greater, and yet all these things had not in any degree, even down to the last days of his life, caused him to forget the love of a true son to a noble sire.

In such questions his own attainments, experience and achievements counted as nothing, he pleaded not for what he had done or intended to do, his only argument was "It was my father's bequest."

I may forget, I shall forget, all about his railroad record and his professional record; to me his War record will grow dim; the letters of the distinguished men which he showed me I shall probably never see again, but the filial loyalty of General Parsons will remain life-long with me, and with the members of the Board that sat with him in deliberation.

But one other trait I shall mention, "Anxiety for this College."

He was troubled, deeply troubled, anxiously troubled for Parsons College, present and future.

To plant and sprout and nourish and develop a College is certainly a herculean task. Those who engage in that work as members of the Board of Trustees are, I doubt not, often led to wonder if they are not victims, by having honors thrust upon them. Some trustees come to the work for their own pleasure and pastime, rather than to carry their own fair share of labor and responsibility. Other trustees, however, feel heavily and conscientiously the importance of their work and give their time and their means and their constructive skill liberally and gladly, counting all gain if only success crown their efforts. Such a trustee and friend of this College was General Parsons.

The struggles through which we have passed in this seed-time of the life of our beloved College at times have been severe, the life seemed almost out, the strength seemed almost exhausted, the path-way to success seemed almost obliterated, and yet some brave hearts and courageous voices were always ready, helping to bring about the desired result.

Speaking today to listeners in sympathy with every word I utter, each of whom knows so much about these times and trials, and each of whom is so loyally interested therein, I desire to say that of all members of the Board of Trustees, General Parsons apparently had the most solicitous anxiety as to the future.

Age had made General Parsons cautious, he had passed through wars and rumors of war, had suffered in financial panics, observed the mistakes of the over-zealous, and these experiences had been so thoroughly ground into his soul that like the watchman in the tower, he called out long in advance, that some danger was in the horizon of his vision. Such companions are not always comfortable but they are very needful. It, no doubt, to him would have been a much more agreeable task to have prophesied pleasant things, but his simple sincerity and his filial loyalty and his own experience and far-sighted vision led him to speak otherwise, and we were not permitted to slip into the lethargy of indifference to admitted facts producing certain results.

Thus, he was a most useful trustee and friend of this College, a most useful friend to this city and community.

His watchfulness along certain lines of over-sight and his ability to awaken us to the realization of certain facts, and the correcting of what to him seemed certain errors of management, resulted in his putting forth efforts on our behalf that brought and will bring, thousands of dollars into our ultimate possession and help make a solved problem of the right of this College to live.

I believe I speak by the record when I say that the influence and the speaking of the right word to the right person and at the right time by General Parsons has resulted in larger gifts from others to our College than has been effected up to the present by any other man, living or dead. And so to his name and memory I join with you in paying this tribute today, of abiding remembrance, a tribute of deep love for the man who in life was so unselfishly anxious about us and accomplished so much for us.

And what of the future? Shall the planning and the working, the praying and the giving of sainted men and women who have gone on before, not be conserved? Shall the planting of the seed sometimes with tears, and always with

prayers, not bear sheaves? Shall the tender plant that is now so promising, not be nurtured and nourished? Shall it not be cared for in the withering hot winds of competition? Shall it not be sheltered from the biting frosts of indifference? Shall this College stand as a monument to the unwise planning of over-zealous idealists, or shall this College stand as a monument to the efforts of godly men and women in solving the question of Christian education? The memory of such men and their efforts in life, the results of such labors as they put forth, and the crowning joy of the measure of success which they attained, impel us to answer back—yes, by the grace of God and his good pleasure and guidance, the work of such men as GENERAL PARSONS shall be preserved and developed, even to a thousand fold.

On the 16th of March, a telegram was handed me. It read, "Father passed away this afternoon." My thoughts then shall be my closing words now.

"Farewell my grand old brother, you and I walked together within that inner temple where only friends may enter. Our companionship was to me a helpful one. I knew that you were passing away; I knew that the Master had called you, and that death was wrapping about you his drapery; I knew that your hand was pressing the gates ajar; I knew that you were going, but I never realized your full worth until you were gone—yes, gone Home.

RESOLUTIONS.

On Behalf of the Board of Trustees of Parsons College.

General Lewis B. Parsons died on March 16, 1907, at his home in Flora, Illinois, in the 89th year of his age. He was a man of great ability, force and energy, of high character and unselfish purposes. His life of untiring activity was richly rewarded with noble achievements in the service of his community, of his country and of mankind.

In a very true sense he was one of the founders of the College and the bent of his judgment gave the final conclusion in favor of its location in Fairfield. Through all its life he gave freely of his means and time and services in its behalf, and his unfaltering hope, prudent counsel, and wise foresight were ever a substantial aid.

Resolved; That in his death we have suffered an ir reparable loss, that we will cherish his memory as of one of the noblest of men, and that we will spread this memorial upon our records, as a witness, though inadequate, to the high regard and respect in which we held General Parsons.

Respectfully submitted,

J. S. McKEMEY,
(Signed) R. J. WILSON,
W. G. ROSS,
Committee.

REMARKS

OF

W. G. ROSS, OF FAIRFIELD, IOWA.

AFTER READING RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

These resolutions are not merely formal, designed as the ordinary compliance with an established custom. They are the sincere and deliberate expression of the sentiment and judgment of GENERAL PARSONS' co-workers on the local board.

He was devoted to our College with that loyalty and vigilance and unselfishness that spring from a strong nature. He gave freely of his time and of his means for its welfare. To him it was a noble instrumentality to be developed and used in the service of humanity and of Christ's kingdom, a fountain-head whose radiance and influence should be seen and acknowledged near and far, now and yet more in the future.

We esteem it an honor to have been associated with him in the care and development of this institution. We feel that an increased weight has been added to our burden by his departure, and for ourselves as trustees we can ask no higher honor than to be adjudged to have measured up to his standard of loyalty and zeal.

It is well for us to linger over the memory of GENERAL PARSONS and search for the meaning and significance of his life. It is a consolation, a strong reassurance in these days when the intellectual atmosphere is tinctured with an alloy of pessimism, to find such a personality and career as he presents. It is an evidence of what our civilization can do. A man of the people, the nameless and unremembered masses, though cast in a larger mould, effective in every walk of life, adequate to every duty, sincere, noble, true.

GENERAL PARSONS had versatility and variety. He achieved distinction in peace and war. He had a place in

the history of his State, and during a great crisis in the history of the Nation. He had strength from the totality and balance of his equipment. He counted in the life of his community, in church, in school, and in local upbuilding. He delighted in fun and was genial and buoyant to the end. He was hospitable and generous, a choice companion, enjoying friendly converse and reminiscence, the long years of his retrospect being bathed and illumined by the mellowing light which comes from a consciousness of duty well done. He was scholarly and also practical. He had pleasure in the things of the mind and he knew and could use the things of this world. He was wise and most honorable in securing a competence; he builded a noble and beautiful character. He was a gentleman of the old school, which is of a type that never grows old, but which is reproduced in each generation naturally and inevitably, by men of nice and strong minds, of native dignity, austerity and elemental righteousness, united with modesty, graciousness, self-poise, and a certain humaneness that makes of every man a brother.

I first saw General Parsons thirty-one years ago on the occasion of a visit which he paid the College, then housed in the little building later known as the Chapel, and which was destroyed in the fire of 1902. He won the hearts of us young students by a speech of some length and of great fluency and charm, and these excellencies ever remained with him. Two years ago at the Alumni banquet he was called upon without notice to respond to a toast, and captivated the whole audience by the felicity and force of his remarks. Years of toil and anxiety and exquisite responsibility had not impaired the fine balance of his powers. He was indeed our grand old man, a figure familiar, admired, loved from the foundation of the College, and those early Alumni though they are absent, yet in spirit unite with us today in honoring his memory.

Memorial of the Military Order

of the

Loyal Legion of the United States

The following letter accompanied the Memorial Paper prepared for the Loyal Legion by General John C. Black:

Washington, D. C., January 29, 1908.

Captain Roswell H. Mason,
Recorder Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States.
320 Ashland Block, Chicago, Ill.

DEAR CAPTAIN MASON:

An unusual pressure of business has compelled me to delay the preparation of GENERAL PARSONS' memorial until the present time. I enclose it with my sincere regret that I have not been able to deal as I should love to have dealt with the great and gentle character of GENERAL PARSONS.

His life was so full of incident and of usefulness that a volume alone could adequately tell that which the limits of a memorial compel me to compress within a few lines.

Very sincerely yours,

JOHN C. BLACK.

Military Order

of the

Royal Legion of the United States

In Memoriam

Companion

Brigadier General and Brevet Major General

Lewis Baldwin Parsons

Died at Flora, Illinois

March 16, 1907

MILITARY ORDER

OF THE

LOYAL LEGION *of* THE UNITED STATES

COMMANDERY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

CIRCULAR NO. 4.
SERIES OF 1908.
WHOLE NO. 593.

CHICAGO, February 20, 1908.

At a stated meeting of this Commandery, held on the Sixth day of February, Nineteen Hundred and Eight, the accompanying report of a Committee appointed to prepare a tribute of respect to the memory of our late Companion Brigadier General and Brevet Major General LEWIS BALDWIN PARSONS was received and ordered published.

By order of Brevet Brig. Gen.
SAMUEL FALLOWS,
Commander.

ROSWELL H. MASON,
Captain, Recorder.

LEWIS BALDWIN PARSONS

BORN in Genesee County, New York, April 5th, 1818. Entered the service as Capt. and A. Q. M., U. S. V., November 4th, 1861; Col. and Addtl. A. D. C., U. S. V., April 10th, 1862; assigned to duty as Q. M., with rank of Col., August 2nd, 1864; Brig. Gen., U. S. V., March 12th, 1865; Bvt. Major Gen., U. S. V., "for meritorious services," April 30th, 1866; mustered out April 30th, 1866.

Elected an Original Companion of the First Class of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, through the Commandery of the State of Illinois, March 12th, 1891.

Died at Flora, Illinois, March 16th, 1907.

When General LEWIS B. PARSONS was appointed to the Quartermaster's Department of the armies serving in the West, he was an applicant for a position in the active service at the front and on the firing line. That he was prevented from receiving the more dangerous position was a dispensation almost of the higher wisdom and benignity. No odds how high he might have risen in the conflict, in the more stirring events of battle and siege, he would not and he could not have rendered his country greater service than he did.

The vast forces of the Union were held on the very edge of the fields of strife by the difficulties of transportation. The few lines of railroad only supplemented the great flotillas of temporary and fragile boats that filled the Western waters. The lines of railroad were long, poorly constructed and slenderly equipped; and yet the movements of the armies and their success in the field depended upon the ability to feed and to clothe them as they advanced. It was part of the great game of defensive

war that these railroads should be destroyed and stripped of their equipment as the enemy fell back, and these destructions and losses had to be made good. The number of machine shops and equipment establishments were limited to the hardly appreciable demand even of those slender roads, and were designed to make good the ordinary destructions of material in time of peace. They had to be energized, to be multiplied, to be increased in size, and all of their product had to be used for the purposes above indicated.

The duties thus suddenly thrown upon General Parsons and his associates were titanic in their proportions, and yet, all of the duties assumed by him were faithfully and promptly done, and at the end the rehabilitated roads in charge of the army were doing all of the work demanded by a million fighting men. If a siege was in progress, reinforcements were necessary, and they were furnished. If a campaign was planned, the depots had to be selected and filled. The enormous stores of the Government, which was adding hundreds of thousands of men and tens of thousands of tons of food to sustain them, had to be carried. If one great army could spare a portion of its strength for the relief or reinforcement of another, the detachments had to be transported; sometimes over scores, and sometimes over many hundreds of miles, and the whole vast field of operations had to be scanned by the eye of the masterful man who would perform this great and necessary duty.

This fell to Lewis B. Parsons to do, and that he accomplished the work is known and appreciated of all students of the logistics of that troublous time. His greatest single achievement, the most picturesque and startling in the annals of the war, was in the movement of Schofield's army from the neighborhood of Nashville to the Coast near Wilmington, North Carolina, passing over the Ohio River, eastward over the Alleghenies, and down by way of the Atlantic Coast to its destination; and the

men who had stood fighting splendidly with Thomas at Nashville appeared in front of their astounded and bewildered foemen at a new and far distant point in the theater of war.

Who was the man, and what training had been his that enabled him to accomplish this great work? He was the descendant of a long line of worthy and illustrious Americans, whose frugal habits of life had made their impress upon their son, who trained for his duty in a simple college of that time, and fitted only for the affairs of civic life apparently, yet had developed mind and heart and physical strength for the discharge of his subsequent great work.

Leaving the college and entering the practice of law, he sought a situation and received it in the state of Illinois and in the little town of Alton, and here for years he devoted himself to the practice of that great profession. Always he was true to himself; always he was a dutiful son; always the worthy head of a worthy household, prospering, in the smaller ways of the time and of the region, earning the respect and regard of all associates and the confidence of his fellows at the bar. From this active practice he entered, as opportunity offered, into other fields of enterprise, modestly, safely, sanely augmenting his fortune as decent opportunity afforded, and standing at the close of 1860 approved of all with whom he was acquainted.

Among these enterprises subsidiary to his calling as a lawyer had been experience in railroading, and so when the call came it found him a matured, experienced and thoughful man in the prime of life, perhaps a little beyond its meridian, but full of purpose and energy and patriotism. In all that was afterwards committed to him he made no failure, but success was given to him because he had knowledge, judgment, and absolute devotion to the cause of his country.

Of what he did during the time of war the record is ineradicable; it has been written into the annals of the

Government; it has been pondered by the students of logistics, and it afforded the first great example of the application of modern means of transportation to the uses of war. Were trains to be employed in carrying troops to a distant point, LEWIS B. PARSONS provided them; were the great rivers to be used for the needs of the army, LEWIS B. PARSONS assembled the flotillas and fitted them for their purposes; were food or clothing or forage or arms to be supplied, LEWIS B. PARSONS gave the orders that carried them to their destination; were Grant or McPherson or Sherman to be fitted out in the midst of great enterprises, they rested with absolute reliance upon the work of PARSONS, and he never failed them. And when the record of victory was written, when the bulletins published to the world the accomplishments of our armies, underneath all the signatures of the captains might be discerned the modest name of PARSONS. There were others, it is true, that were great in these fields, but to none was it given to be so conspicuous and so widely employed as to this man.

And now after a long life, part in struggle, part in peace, part in sunshine and part in storm, full of years and of honors, he has been borne to rest. He was a great organizer; he was a great officer; he was a great patriot; he was a great American. It was permitted to him to survive by many years the close of the great struggle in which he bore an honored part; to go back and forward among a reconciled people and in peace over the ways which once he had helped to fill with the thunder and the splendor of war; and in these later days the gentleness of the patriot and the lover of his kind came over and colored all his intercourse with his fellow-citizens.

Personally the writer knew him long and loved him well, and remarked him as one of the greatest characters that he had ever known. If he had an enemy in the world or had given occasion for enmity, that fact was never

known to his friends. All looked upon him and honored him, and when he passed away in the quiet and seclusion of his home in southern Illinois, the going down of his sun of life was only to make way for a star in that dark firmament where all the great appear, shining fixed and luminous forever.

JOHN C. BLACK,
SAMUEL FALLOWS,
ROSWELL H. MASON,
Committee.

Lewis Baldwin Parsons

A Memorial Paper Read
Before the

Missouri Society of the Sons of the Revolution

St. Louis, Missouri

February 22nd, 1908

LEWIS BALDWIN PARSONS

Lewis Baldwin Parsons was born in Genesee County, New York, April 5th, 1818. He entered Yale College from Gouverneur, New York, in 1836, graduating in 1840; and after two years spent in teaching a classical school in Mississippi, entered Harvard Law School, graduating in 1844. He at once went West, locating at Alton, Illinois, where he acquired a large law practise and was for several years City Attorney. In 1854 he removed to St. Louis, became Attorney for Page and Bacon, who were then engaged in building the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad, and was connected with that Road for many years thereafter, being at various times, Director, Treasurer and President.

In 1861, he determined, as he wrote, "To give all aid in my power for the preservation of the Government, as my grandfather had given seven years of his life during the Revolutionary War," and arranging his affairs so that they could be left, he went to Washington and offered his services to General McClellan whom he had known as Vice-President of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad. He entered the Army on McClellan's Staff with the rank of Captain, but was soon sent West at his own urgent request, reporting to General Allen, Chief Quartermaster at St. Louis, who, knowing of his previous railroad experience, ordered him to take charge of railroad transportation in the West and reform the great abuses then existing in that department. His immediate and marked success in introducing system where had been chaos, caused General Allen to appoint him Chief of Rail and River Transportation for the West, with headquarters at St. Louis.

The tremendous responsibility of this position can only be properly estimated by recalling the immense distances

to be covered, the great Armies operating in this region, the enormous quantities of supplies necessary and the great battles fought there, while ample testimony was borne by the Generals in the field, as also by Secretary Stanton and President Lincoln, to COLONEL PARSONS' remarkable success in so organizing and managing this Department that "no military movement ever failed or faltered for lack of transportation." He greatly desired active service in the field, but his oft repeated request for a transfer to the line, was not granted and his only experience in field service was at Corinth, where he was on General Halleck's staff—at the battle of Chickasaw Bayou— and at the capture of Arkansas Post, where he received special mention for bravery. COLONEL PARSONS remained in the West until 1864, when he was given charge of all Rail and River Transportation of the Armies of the United States and was ordered to Washington, where he was stationed during the remainder of the War. In 1865, he was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General on the autographic order of President Lincoln and on finally retiring from service in May, 1866, Secretary Stanton conferred on him the rank of Brevet Major General.

After two years of travel abroad, GENERAL PARSONS returned to St. Louis and in 1875 removed to his large farm near Flora, Illinois, where he spent the remaining years of his life in comparative quiet, yet taking an active interest to the last in affairs of Home and State and Nation. He passed away after a brief illness on March 16th, 1907.

"GENERAL PARSONS' right to membership in the Society Sons of the Revolution was through the services of his grandfather, Charles Parsons, Second Lieutenant, Second New York, October, 1775; First Lieutenant, Twenty-First February, 1776; First Lieutenant, First New York, Twenty-First November, 1776, to rank from Twenty-First February, 1776; Captain-Lieutenant, First September, 1778; Captain, Twenty-Sixth March, 1779; was with Washington at

Valley Forge, wounded at the Battle of Monmouth and was present at the surrender of Cornwallis; served to June, 1783; member of New York Society of the Cincinnati."

Printed Notices and Extracts from Letters of Friends

Received in March, 1907

PRESS NOTICES.

Many notices of the death of General Parsons appeared in the daily press, but we copy only an editorial taken from the St. Louis Globe Democrat of March 18th, 1907.

"In the death of General Lewis B. Parsons of Flora, Ill., the country loses one of the men upon whose ability, courage and integrity the victory of its arms depended in the times that tried men's souls. Among the men of the strong arm and clean hand whose work contributed to its success he was as conspicuous as active. His organizing and executive abilities, soon perceived and sorely needed, led early in the war to his promotion from the line to the post of chief of the transportation department, in which his work won successive promotions in military grade up to the rank of brigadier general. He had the confidence of Lincoln and Grant, and in the voluminous correspondence he leaves are letters expressing their sense of dependence upon his intelligent co-operation, and their appreciation of the high service which always put men in the right place at the right time. After the close of the war the improvement in methods of transporting large bodies of troops which were made under his control of the transportation bureau, were highly commended by General von Moltke. The United States will be fortunate if, in the next great war, it has in command of such a vital work a man of the singleness of purpose, unselfish devotion to duty, and high ability of Lewis B. Parsons."

The following notice is copied from the Obituary Record in the Harvard Graduates Magazine, June, 1907.

"General Lewis Baldwin Parsons, *l* '44, died on March 16 at his home in Flora, Ill. He was born in

Genesee County, N. Y., in 1818; graduated A. B. at Yale, in 1840; studied law at Harvard, where he received his law degree in 1844; was city attorney of Alton, Ill., 1846-49. As attorney, treasurer, and president of the Ohio and Mississippi R. R. from 1854 to 1878 he had much to do with the construction and operation of that line. He had a distinguished war record, being made captain in a volunteer regiment Oct. 31, 1861; was promoted colonel April 4, 1862, and brigadier-general May 11, 1865, for special services. His most conspicuous war service was as chief of rail and river transportation of the armies of the United States. He was brevetted major-general for meritorious services and mustered out April 30, 1866. General Parsons was the Democratic candidate for lieutenant-governor of Illinois in 1880 on the ticket with Lyman Trumbull, candidate for governor. He was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention of 1884. He served as president of the Illinois Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, 1895 to 1898. He was a member of the G. A. R., the Loyal Legion, the Society of the Army of the Tennessee, Sons of the Revolution, and the Society of Colonial Wars. He is survived by one daughter, Julia E. Parsons, and a son, Charles L. Parsons, who lives in Colorado."

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF FRIENDS

From General John W. Noble of St. Louis.

"You have my sympathy in your affliction. Your loss of a father is felt by many of us as akin to ours who have deemed him a brother. The association of long years had endeared him to me; as a comrade in the war for the Union where he served with such distinguished ability; as a Yalensian, who was ever warm in his attachment to our Alma Mater; as a fellow citizen who sought constantly

the public welfare; in every relation of life, which he strove to support by his voice, his pen and by his virtuous example. But he will receive from our country his due praise and recognition, which is vain for me to attempt to express.—Your consolation will ever be, that in his very long life he was guided and supported by an unfaltering faith in the goodness and mercy of God."

From Rev. Daniel March, D. D. of Woburn, Mass., of the Class of 1840, Yale College.

"I cannot refrain from sending you the warmest expression of my sympathy with you in the loss of your honored and beloved father. I shall never cease to cherish the precious memories of college days spent with him, and with multitudes of others I shall keep alive the record of his services to the country in the time of its greatest need. It has been a rare pleasure to me within these late years to get a word occasionally from him recalling the memories of other days and looking forward to the endless years of the life upon which he has now entered."

From the Rev. Jay Clizbe of Michigan.

"You have much to be thankful for. And not only for this but that your father was—*what he was*. I have seldom met a man who impressed me so strongly as did your father, and I am not sure that I ever met one of such modesty after having performed such deeds as his. I can sincerely congratulate you on the rich heritage which he has left you in the life which he lived, and the character which was his."

From Prof. Knight of Washington.

"I wish to express my appreciation of the long and noble life led by your father. So extended, so well rounded, so full of usefulness, so vitally connected with the large

concerns of National life, with Christian education and the interest of Christ's Kingdom, was his life, that he will stand out in history as an historic character. His cultivated intellect, his boundless energy, his rare judgment and consecrated heart made him an effective factor in the many interests he espoused. But some of us will remember him best for his great kindly heart of sympathy and helpfulness in hard places, and his wise counsel. Mrs. K— has just said, 'A noble heart and a perfect gentleman has passed away.' His departure was the crowning day of his long and useful life."

From Rev. Cary F. Moore of Fulton, Illinois.

"I must express to you my deep sympathy in the irreparable loss that has come to you in the death of General Parsons. For myself, as one of the younger Trustees of Parsons College, I feel that I have lost a friend, one whose wise counsel and just judgment and winsome personality will be greatly missed from among us. General Parsons was a man whom it was a privilege to know."

From Dr. Chamberlain.

President of McKendree College, Lebanon, Illinois.

"It was not my good fortune to know the General until later years, but I was so profoundly impressed with his courtly bearing, his high intelligence, and his exalted character that I wish to express the sorrow I experience in knowing that he is no longer to be a figure among the people that he served with such eminent distinction."

From Miss S. D. Doremus of New York.

"My warm personal friendship with General Parsons dates from his marriage with a beloved cousin of rare gifts

and graces. Visits from both at our home gave me varied opportunities of knowing the many-sided personality of General Parsons, and I recall those days as full of golden memories. It was always a feast to hear him converse, with his broad culture and his wide views on every subject. Quickness of repartee and aptness in illustration made one wish for stenographic notes of a dinner conversation. Rarely could one explain so clearly a difficult political situation, or discuss more dispassionately a public question.

Above all, General Parsons was a courteous listener and had the gift of placing even the timid at ease and making all appear at the best advantage. Long will his words be cherished."

From Various Other Friends.

"I first met your father in 1866 when I was a girl. I always considered him one of the most perfect gentlemen I ever knew. His mental culture and his grace of manner made him acceptable in the most polished and most intellectual society, while his force of character, Christian virtues and social qualities made him a natural leader among men. In all the years that I knew him he was one of my inspirations."

"I cannot tell you with what sorrow I have learned of your Father's recent death and realize that I have seen General Parsons for the last time. Respect for his many strong and manly qualities and for the exceptional wisdom with which he handled such problems as he had to face, love for his goodness, his simplicity and his truth, and gratitude for the kindness he has continually shown me, all struggle within me for expression."

"Though we weep we can only feel thankful that the bonds of flesh that have so long held the spirit which really dwelt more in that unseen world than here and was so fitted to enjoy that higher life, have at last been broken and the spirit is free; forever done with pain, weariness, sorrow and sin; yet none the less do we feel the loss and will we miss the care and presence of that brave, heroic soul."

"Your Father, who had such a great loving heart that was always alive to the sorrows of others and who gave the warmest sympathy to all troubled and sorrowing ones."

"I cannot think of him as dead. He has only gone home and as earth was the better for such a man, helpful in all its activities, so heaven is the happier for his presence."

"He had a great influence over my life and from my earliest remembrance of him he roused and stimulated me and he was so warm in his affections that he called out the same warmth from others. His was a brave, heroic life and he ever aspired to higher and higher levels, so that at last it was a fully rounded, ripened life which was garnered by the Great Reaper, full of years and good works."

"We can only hope that *we* may be able to make some approach to a life so useful and good as the one just laid down, for truly General Parsons life was filled with goodness and his usefulness to his fellow-men cannot be estimated. We shall always treasure his memory as one beloved."

"The passing on of one who has so truly lived, is only beautiful and hopeful, for by such lives, ours are enriched."

General Lewis Baldwin Parsons

An Appreciation

By

Rev. Willis G. Craig, D. D., L. L. D.
Chicago



GENERAL PARSONS, JUNE, 1905.
IN HIS 88TH YEAR.

GENERAL LEWIS BALDWIN PARSONS.

The man, of whom the foregoing pages give a brief sketch, is worthy to be embalmed in the memory not only of this generation, but in that of succeeding generations of American citizens. He represented a type which influenced the founding of this great nation, which has been influential in its ongoing up to this hour, and which ought to be preserved intact as the surest ground of hope that our future development will correspond with the beginnings, and the movement of the national life to the present. His character rested upon the deep ingrained principles which we are accustomed to call Puritan. These principles brought into existence a race of men who illustrated with singular emphasis the fundamental conceptions that lie at the base of human government, intended to establish and to maintain the fullest, freest, but most carefully guarded freedom. In this type we find that sturdy sense of the worth of things, of the value of men, of the rights of men, and of the possible destiny of men whose eyes are bright to see the possibility of a truly developed human society. This type of man gave no room to what we call expediency, opportunism, self-aggrandisement, temporary make-shifts based upon the immediate gratification of personal ends. The type of man whom he represents looked deep into human nature, into social relations, and to the fulfillment of great, sublime duties. These men were prepared for any degree of self-sacrifice and self-restraint in order to accomplish the noble ends to which their lives were devoted. The character and important services which General Parsons rendered to his country cannot be perfectly understood save as we recognize these great underlying principles of his life, which represent the type to which we refer.

General Parsons *was a man of great native ability.* He was reared under circumstances which made it difficult to obtain the training necessary for the development of the commanding qualities of his mind and yet so forceful a character would never alter the determination to secure for himself that discipline which would bring him to the stage of active life, not only as a man of great powers, but as a man prepared for the highest duties of American citizenship. Without the underlying characteristics to which we have referred, he would unquestionably have turned from education to business in the early part of his life. We might then have had a strong, shrewd business man who would have reached perhaps prominence in the commercial world, but we would never have had General Lewis B. Parsons. The difficulty of gaining the education which he knew to be necessary to an enlarged career simply brought into play the prominent characteristics of his life. All through his course at Yale, his school teaching, and his law course at Harvard, the same dominating principles were at work, and as a result of his persistency in bringing to fruition his early plans, we find him ready, upon the threshold of life, to seize the opportunities which were presented to him, with a strong, masterful hand which never lost its grip upon the duties to which he was called and which grew firmer from year to year as he entered more and more fully into the demands of an enlarged and varied career.

The preceding papers have given us a bird's-eye view of the almost marvelous service which he rendered to the country, during the civil war, as Chief of Transportation for the armies of the West and later Chief of the entire field of the North, with headquarters at Washington. It is no hazard to say that General Parsons could not have accomplished this far-reaching work save as he was the man that he was, and save as he had been prepared by a thor-

ough training of his faculties for the stupendous undertaking.

His willingness to enter upon this form of service contrary to his own wishes, which led him to choose that at the forefront of battle, is one of the strongest proofs of the robust and self-denying character of the man. With this eager desire to serve upon the field made known by frequent requests to his superiors to permit him to take his place with the great soldiers who were guiding the storm of conflict, he nevertheless submitted to the unquestioned judgment of his commanding officers, who assured him that he could not be spared from the post to which he had been assigned, for several reasons; first, the importance of the arduous duties belonging to the position; second, his eminent fitness for the discharge of these duties; and, third, from the admitted fact that there was no one to be found who was equal to this high and taxing position. So here is a man, specially trained for the work of the world, who at the time of trouble, stress and strain, stood out alone in the position of singular and sole fitness for one of the most important requirements of the great civil war. This is the key to the full understanding of his ability and worth, resulting in the unique service which he rendered to his country. There were other officers in the army who, if occasion had offered, would have been equal to the task of independent command. In this class we could count our names by the score. There was but one man who, by common consent, rose to the position of supreme sufficiency for the great duties of Chief of Transportation. Thus we see General Lewis B. Parsons in the light of his uniqueness; and when we give attention even to the most limited account of his services, we see that he stands side by side with the most illustrious men who were raised up to guide the destinies of this nation when in the throes of a war, which by comparison, causes other military movements of late generations to dwindle into insignificance.

As a thinker in the field of political science, General Parsons ranked high in the midst of his great contemporaries. He was a student of political economy. He was a trained and thoroughly disciplined lawyer. He understood the great underlying principles of a free commonwealth. He recognized the necessity of good laws, expressed in terms of continuity with the past, and thus fitted to illustrate and vivify the fundamental principles of our constitutional bond. He understood the necessity of obedience to law and was unflinching, throughout his entire life, in the advocacy of such necessity in any true view of national life. Partisan views, and honors derived from such partisan conceptions, looking to individual advantage, had no place in General Parsons' programme of life. He was a lover of his country; he was ready to serve his country for his country's good. He was not concerned to obtain position at a sacrifice of cherished principles, and here again comes into full view the type of man which he so fully represented. Even as his years advanced, he did not yield to the inducements which were held out to him for political advancement, but remained true to the guiding convictions of a matured life, and served his country by the enunciation of his principles whether in the quietude of the retired life, or in the public assertion of the well-settled views, which were but the expression of solid character and of deep and careful reflection. His intimate friends are called upon to admire this stern determination to walk in the paths of upright citizenship throughout the long years of his life after the tumult of war had subsided, even more than for the heroic qualities which he displayed when the nation was engaged in a hand to hand conflict for the perpetuation of its life. Here he displays to us an example which will go far to steady the young men of the land, and to guide them along the only lines which great and honest spirits will strive to follow.

In the midst of all his varied activity as a busy lawyer, as a railroad builder and manager, as a banker and as the owner and administrator of a large plantation, GENERAL PARSONS found time for large literary culture. His library was filled with books of the highest importance, his life was enlarged, cultivated and simplified by contact with the noblest writings, and his conversation, when turned from the busy activities of life, was enriched and elevated, making him a companion of the most delightful kind to people of large cultivation and refined tastes. This literary culture is often neglected by our men of high position and acknowledged general success, and this failure oftentimes leaves the life barren of the most precious fruits, and of the most satisfactory happiness.

He was under great obligation in the direction of an uplifting and thorough Christian education to the counsels of his father, who without the son's opportunities for wide culture, had joined himself to the company of men in this land, who appreciated the importance of thorough-going education to the rising youth of the country. But he could not have pursued the purpose to forward the true education of the youth of our land, with the avidity which characterized the last thirty-five years of his life, save as he, himself a thoroughbred collegian and a polished scholar, had realized in his own experience the benefits of a true training. He kept in touch with Yale, his Alma Mater. He assisted in founding a Christian college in the state of Iowa, and by voice and pen and gift pressed forward this great and beneficent plan intended to furnish to the ingenuous youth of the land a complete equipment for large, influential and sane activity. GENERAL PARSONS will be identified with the educational movement of the West for all the years to come, and he will stand out in the memory of the generation which knew him best, as the pattern of a highly cultured man, rejoicing in his own opportunities, and determined, so far as in him lay, to pave the way for similar

opportunities to those who lived wtih him, and who should come after him.

General Parsons' *name stands enrolled among the office-bearers of the Presbyterian Church U. S. A.* He belonged to a goodly fellowship—a strong Christian ruler among strong Christian rulers, taking his place as an overseer of the flock of God, estimating at its right value that great Kingdom which is to be established here upon the earth, giving his time, his money and his best thought, not only to the local congregation, but to the great Communion of which he was a fitting representative. He attended the church courts from the session up to the General Assembly; his voice was heard advocating the great fundamental principles of the church to which he belonged. As the years passed by, the splendors of this unearthly Kingdom brightened and grew more and more real to his spiritual vision, and as the end drew nigh he saw, not from far, but close at hand, the vast and eternal verities of the Kingdom of God. The principles of the revealed Truth, planted in his young heart by parents who knew the Truth, grew stronger and stronger, formed his opinions, guided his conduct and established upon a firm foundation indomitable hopes for the final victory of the cause of Truth and Righteousness.

He lived to a ripe old age. The friends who knew him intimately as he passed beyond four score years, were used to wonder at the grasp which he still maintained upon all the elements which underlie human concern—the welfare of man as man. Far and wide throughout this land hosts of friends cherish his memory as a sacred possession, and the influence of his character and his life will stimulate and bless the generations which he left behind. The brave words "that life is earnest" and that it is worth while to those who love God, and man, and the world of men, receive a fresh illustration from the life and labors of General Lewis B. Parsons!

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